

Monday, October 12, 1998

Lennon poem earns \$5,350 at auction

LONDON (AP) — A mouthful poem written by John Lennon earned \$5,350 at a Saturday auction for the poem, which was written in 1963 and is one of the few handwritten poems by the former Beatle.

Corman to produce 'Night in India'

HYDERABAD — Producer and director Corman has announced a new production project, a feature film titled 'Night in India'.

It's all about making me

KINGSTON — A group of people are planning to launch a new project, a feature film titled 'Night in India'.

Couple prove perfect match kidney trans

NEW ORLEANS — A couple has proven to be a perfect match for a kidney transplant.

Twins born months apart fourth birthday

NEW ORLEANS — A couple has proven to be a perfect match for a kidney transplant.

### Lebanese teenager held by Israelis for a year — rights group

BEIRUT (AFP) — A group which campaigns on behalf of Lebanese prisoners held by Israel called Monday for the release of a 15-year-old who it said has been held for a year in Israel's "security zone" in southern Lebanon. Ali Tawbeh was abducted from the village of Amun, in the central part of the security zone, by the Israeli proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) in October 1997, the Committee for the Release of Lebanese Prisoners said in a statement. "Ali, (then) a 14-year-old schoolboy, was accused of being an international terrorist," the group said. Tawbeh was taken to the SLA-run Khiam prison where his father Mustafa, accused of supporting the resistance against the Israeli occupation of the security zone, is also being held. Mustafa Tawbeh had been kidnapped two weeks earlier by the Israeli-backed militia along with his wife who was released shortly afterwards, it said.

# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation  
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانكليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية «الراي»

### Israel to ease blockade of Palestinian areas

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel will early Tuesday ease the blockade of the Palestinian areas which it imposed October 2, the army spokesman announced Monday. As from 2 a.m. (midnight GMT) Tuesday, 21,000 Palestinian workers from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be allowed to go to their jobs in Israel, the spokesman said. The total closure has been in force with brief respites for 22 days, since the beginning of the Jewish holiday period. It was imposed after Israeli security services warned that the Islamic Hamas group planned to carry out a major suicide bomb attack or kidnap an Israeli soldier in retaliation for the killing of two of its leaders by Israeli special forces. Hamas has carried out more than a dozen suicide bombings in Israel since 1994, killing scores of Israelis.

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## Regent, Arafat express hope Washington summit will yield positive results

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat expressed hope that Palestinian and Israeli negotiators will reach an agreement during their talks in Washington next week.

"We are always optimistic," Prince Hassan said in a joint press conference with the Palestinian leader. "We have to reach a clear threshold of accomplishment. This is what we do expect. God willing."

The Regent said that Jordan resorts to "quiet and constructive diplomacy" in support of the Palestinian negotiators.

The Palestinian leader's visit came ahead of a summit at Wye Plantation near Washington on Oct. 15 with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The U.S. president called the summit after Israel agreed in principle to withdraw from a further 13 per cent of the West Bank before the two sides launch final status negotiations.

The two parties are still far apart on several issues, and both Israeli and Palestinian negotiators expressed fear that the meeting will achieve little.

"We hope to arrive at a conclusion and something concrete not only talks, talks," President Arafat told reporters after his meeting with the Regent.

"I am sure that President Clinton will push forward and exert all his efforts for a positive conclusion and positive results," Arafat said.

"We hope that the American initiative will be accepted and we will start implementing it in Washington," the Palestinian leader added.

He was referring to the U.S. proposal for an Israeli army withdrawal from 13 per cent of the West Bank, which the Palestinians have accepted but to which Israel has given no "official" approval.

"We hope that we will reach a major accomplishment regarding the redeployment and Jerusalem, which is facing a Judaisation plan," Arafat said.

Prince Hassan and the Palestinian leader said they also discussed trade between Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority, which faces serious obstacles from



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat address a joint press conference following talks they held in Amman

## Clinton talks to Netanyahu, Arafat ahead of summit

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton spoke by telephone on Monday to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to gauge prospects for progress in Middle East peace talks this week.

White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said Clinton spoke to the two leaders separately for a half hour each and tried to identify the areas of agreement and disagreement ahead of a peace summit to begin on Thursday in the Washington area.

At the Wye River Conference Centre on Maryland's eastern shore, Netanyahu and Arafat will try to hammer out an agreement on U.S. proposals for a three-phased Israeli handover of a further 13 per cent of the West Bank in return for a Palestinian Authority crackdown on militants responsible for anti-Israeli violence.

An Israeli withdrawal would effectively be the last in a series of interim deals started five years ago and could launch talks on even tougher "final status"

issues, including the borders of Palestinian territory, the status of Jerusalem and Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

Israel occupied east Jerusalem during the 1967 Middle East war and has declared the whole city its undivided capital.

Palestinians want east Jerusalem to be the capital of any future Palestinian state.

Lockhart said Clinton reiterated to Netanyahu and Arafat that the objective is to conclude the interim agreement and move to the final status talks.

"He said he hopes we can make progress toward that goal at Wye River and said that the real question is whether the leaders are ready to make the hard decisions to make peace a reality," Lockhart said.

Clinton will open the summit on Thursday in a ceremony that could be held at the White House. The summit could last several days, and it is possible Clinton could travel to Wye River if his presence is deemed necessary, aides said.

"Obviously he's looking forward to participating as appropriate and seeing if we can't narrow the differences," Lockhart said.

Clinton cancelled a scheduled trip on Saturday to New Haven, Connecticut, to attend his 25th Yale Law School reunion in order to be free to lend a hand in the talks if needed.

He plans to go ahead with a trip to Chicago and St. Louis on Friday to raise money for fellow Democrats.

The president said last week he was encouraged by prospects for the meeting.

"I'm encouraged by the attitude and sense of openness I felt from Prime Minister Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat the last time they were here, and if they can come back here with that spirit we're close enough now that we can get this done," he said.

Clinton said it was important to hold the final status talks in a relaxed atmosphere, meaning that they should begin as soon as possible ahead of the May 1999 deadline for wrapping up those talks.

## Turkey sees signs of progress in Syria dispute

ANTALYA (R) — Turkey said on Monday it saw possible signs of progress in its dispute with Syria over accusations that Damascus backs Kurdish rebels.

The last two weeks have brought Damascus and Ankara close to an armed conflict that many fear could spread through the region. Turkey has threatened to use force if Syria does not expel the man who has led the 14-year-old campaign for Kurdish autonomy.

However, Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem told journalists after talks with Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa: "[The Egyptians] brought a message from Syria saying our expectations on the terrorism issue would be met and had even begun to be met. We hope there will be talks in this direction."

He was speaking at a summit of Balkan leaders in the Turkish resort of Antalya but had earlier struck a note of caution.

"We have to be cautious with Syria," he said in Ankara before flying to the summit. "For us the implementation is important and the continuous implementation is the central issue."

An Egyptian official said Musa was flying to Damascus to continue his efforts to forge a peaceful solution.

Over the weekend, Turkey maintained pressure on Damascus.

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, alluding to long-standing Syrian territorial claims, said Turkey would "poke out the eyes" of those who cover its soil.

Since the dispute erupted early this month, Turkish newspapers with links to the military have carried reports of planned troop movements towards the frontier with Syria, which denies backing Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels.

The Hurriyet newspaper, close to the security apparatus, said Turkish forces were planning large scale war games next month involving up to 50,000 troops close to the Syrian border.

"With this exercise it should be understood just how serious Turkey is in its demands from Damascus," the newspaper quoted a military source as saying.

The Turkish general staff had declined comment on any of the reports and witnesses near the eastern end of the 877 kilometre Syrian border near Nusaybin said on Monday there was no unusual military activity.

Western diplomats, however, say Turkey is clearly making a public show of readiness to use force, while keeping diplomatic efforts open through Egypt and Iran. They say Ankara could return to more direct threats against Damascus within a month if it considered Damascus was not bowing to Turkish demands.

Those demands include the expulsion of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan, otherwise known as Apo, who has led a 14-year-old armed campaign that has cost some 28,000 lives.

A Turkish attack on Syria, in whatever form, would trigger angry condemnation from Arab countries who see in the Turkish-Syrian conflict the hand of Israel.

Turkey is currently cultivating an informal defence alliance with Israel, which has stirred suspicion throughout the Arab World.

Washington also alluded to fears that armed conflict could further undermine the already fraught Middle Eastern peace process.

## Government committee for dialogue meets amid scepticism by parties

By Francesca Cini

AMMAN — A government committee entrusted with launching a national dialogue with all civil society institutions held its first preparatory meeting late Monday amid the scepticism of political party leaders, who say they have been left out of a project in which they were to be main partners.

The committee, including seven cabinet members and headed by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, discussed a proposal by Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Minister of Administrative Development Bassam Emoush on the time-frame, the agenda, and the mechanisms for a national dialogue with political parties, professional and labour unions, and other partisan and social activists.

"The meeting was aimed at discussing the mechanism for a national dialogue and identifying the different sectors of society that will be involved," said Information Minister Nasser Judah, adding that preparations for the start of the committee's work will be thorough and will take some time.

But political parties have complained that they were not involved from the initial stage of the preparatory work, stressing that they all learned about the government's decision to set up the committee and provide a framework for dialogue only from the newspapers.

Most party leaders have even gone further, questioning the very need for an "ad hoc" committee to carry out a national dialogue.

Even moderate groups, such as the National Constitutional Party (NCP), have pointed out that institutions provided for by

the Constitution, the National Charter, and ordinary laws are already in place, and they could function as fora for debate if only they were activated or governed by more modern regulations.

According to news reports, the proposal readied by Emoush, an Islamist expelled by the Muslim Brotherhood for his opposition to the movement's decision to boycott last November's general elections, would include the creation of seven sub-committees, each dealing with a segment of society, from women's unions to syndicates.

Judah said the formation of the government committee for dialogue was in implementation of His Majesty King Hussein's letter of designation to

(Continued on page 12)

## Anti-Jordanian statements by Tlass prompt unprecedented attack against Syria

By Alla A. Toukan

AMMAN — Retired army officers and tribal leaders are spearheading the Kingdom's counteroffensive against a recent state of anti-Jordanian statements made by Syrian Defence Minister Mustafa Tlass.

But while the past week has witnessed an unprecedented attack against Syria by the government, retired army officers, and the media to counter what they described as "unjustified" accusations, the opposition and prominent figures either remained silent in the face of Tlass' statements, or publicly renewed their backing for Damascus in its recent dispute with Ankara.

Last week, Tlass accused Jordan of attempting to "judaize" its people, of not taking part in the 1973 Syrian-Egyptian War against Israel, and of obstructing the Saudi army from crossing the Kingdom to assist in the fight against Israel on the Golan Heights.

Tlass also reportedly said Jordan will become the alternative homeland for the Palestinians, and that it was part of the Turkish-Israeli strategic alliance.

The timing of Tlass' statements has raised eyebrows at a time when Damascus was calling for Arab solidarity against Ankara.

Some opposition figures said they were dismayed that Jordan responded to Syria's anti-Jordanian statements, which have been a regular feature of the Syrian media, at a time when Damascus was embroiled in a serious dispute with a non-Arab player in the region.

But according to the Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan, Mustafa Hamameh, the government chose to respond this time because "it has had enough."

"This comes in response to an accumulation of all kinds of events, (Tlass' statements) hit the Hashemites, the army, and the tribes (in Jordan)," said

Hamameh.

Earlier last week, Jordan refrained from taking sides in the Syrian-Turkish crisis, but urged both countries to peacefully resolve their differences and said it would be willing to use its good offices with Ankara to help defuse tension, if Damascus asked.

But it is doubtful that Syria, which has had strained relations with Jordan for decades, would ask Amman to mediate, especially as the Kingdom's political and military ties with Ankara have recently advanced.

Leading columnists and political parties, many of them centrist, have demanded that Jordan throw its full weight behind Syria, despite tense bilateral relations.

Jordan has traditionally maintained a policy of restraint in reacting to Syrian accusations, and the media has traditionally towed the line.

Last Tuesday the Cabinet denounced Tlass' statement. Since then, Jordan's leading

daily, Al Ra'i, especially, has carried a number of articles denouncing the general's accusations, and all newspapers have carried statements by tribal leaders and retired army officers, who fought alongside the Syrians during the 1973 War, condemning the statements.

Also in the past week, in what appears to be a shift in policy, the government announced that Syria holds 728 Jordanians in its jails. Family members of the inmates said Sunday they will be waging a campaign for their release.

Meanwhile, the Coalition of Opposition Parties' Steering Committee announced on Sunday that it was sending a delegation to Damascus in a show of solidarity with Syria against Turkey.

Earlier this week, members of Islamic and pan-Arab parties, as well as women's groups, visited the Syrian embassy in Amman to show their "unwavering support" for Syria, but steered clear of criticising Tlass' statement.

Also, Hussein Mjalli, who heads the bar association, along

with various political parties, sent a letter of support to Syrian President Hafez Assad.

But, Bassam Haddadin, a leftist member of Parliament, denounced the opposition for its stand. "The silence of the opposition parties and their refusal to comment on Mustafa Tlass' statements, whose speciality is harming Jordan, is a silence that is unacceptable by any standards," said Haddadin, in a column in Al Ra'i.

Hamameh also blasted what he called the "patriarchal revolutionary current" of the political parties.

"These people who went to the embassy are the same ones who came out strong against Syria during the Gulf war," when Damascus joined the U.S.-led coalition that evicted Iraq from Kuwait in 1991, said Hamameh.

"On every issue they react on the gut level and they move to offer unwavering support for the Arab side and total condemnation for the other party. We haven't learnt anything. We have been doing this since the early 18th century.

Alliances shift according to immediate circumstances only," he said.

But former Prime Minister and Senator Taher Masi said Jordan should keep its eye on the more significant issue of the dispute between Damascus and Ankara. "Tlass' statements are untimely and should not have been said. But the conflict between Syria and Turkey is a much bigger issue. We should not be linking the two together," he said. "Our position towards Syria should be principled."

respond to the committee's request to intervene, the committee will stage a sit-in in front of the prime ministry, Sharqawi said.

The committee warned that it will stage a sit-in in front of the Syrian embassy, the International Red Cross Society, the U.N. and the political parties headquarters if its requests remain unheeded.

## Committee calls for release of Jordanian prisoners in Syria

AMMAN (Petra) — A special committee in charge of following up on the conditions of Jordanian prisoners in Syrian jails on Monday called for the release of 1,000 Jordanian prisoners.

The committee called on the government, Parliament and political parties to make every possible effort to ensure the release of those prisoners and allow their families to visit them as early as possible.

The committee, which met on Monday, said it will stage a sit-in on Wednesday, Oct. 14 in front of the Parliament.

Head of the committee Imad Sharqawi, in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the committee will hand over a memorandum

to the speaker and members of the Lower House, describing the conditions of Jordanians held in Syria.

Noting that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not given this issue due attention, the committee called on the government and the Lower House to act immediately to ensure their release.

Should the Lower House fail to

respond to the committee's request to intervene, the committee will stage a sit-in in front of the prime ministry, Sharqawi said.

The committee warned that it will stage a sit-in in front of the Syrian embassy, the International Red Cross Society, the U.N. and the political parties headquarters if its requests remain unheeded.



## Sudanese cabinet approves new law on political parties

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan's cabinet paved the way at the weekend for the return of multi-party politics by passing a bill on political organisations which was published Monday.

The Political Tewali (affiliation) Bill, which has been criticised by opposition groups, must be passed by parliament before becoming law.

The bill grants any group of more than 100 eligible voters the right to form a political organisation which must be committed to freedom, consultation and democracy and whose leaders are chosen in free, direct or indirect elec-

tions.

The organisations formed under the new law must also abide by the constitution passed in July.

But members of opposition parties outlawed after a 1989 coup have rejected that constitution and said that, by extension, they reject the pending legislation.

The outlawed Umma Party, for example, "regards the passage of the constitution as erroneous and therefore regards as such any measure based on it," Abdul Salam, an Umma official, told the Al Sharee Al Siyasi.

Salam renewed his party's

call for setting up a transitional government representing all parties to "consider the main problems" of Sudan and emerge "with appropriate solutions... only then should parties legislation be considered," he added.

Yahia Al Hussein, a lawyer and member of the Baathist Party, told the paper the opposition was against the proposed law, calling it "facial plastic surgery."

The bill has also been criticised for lack of opposition input during the drafting process and for being tailored to the interests of the ruling National Congress.

Under the new legislation, the leadership of political organisations — the term "party" is notable for its absence — must not include anyone who has been convicted within the last seven years of treason, the use of violence or force against the constitutional system, or of any other crime breaching honour and honesty.

These clauses are likely to exclude exiled opposition leaders such as Mohammad Osman Al Mirghani and Sadeq Al Mahdi, who the government says "have committed acts that call for their trial on their return home."



LEBANESE YOUTHS BURN TURKISH PRODUCTS: Lebanese youths burn boxes of chocolates and biscuits made in Turkey during a protest held Monday in Baalbeck in solidarity with Syria. Lebanese President Elias Hrawi yesterday said Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, who has threatened to attack Syria, visited Israel last month to plan the encirclement of Syria and Lebanon (Reuters photo)

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Nine Algerian rebels sentenced to death

ALGIERS (R) — An Algerian court sentenced nine Islamists to death in their absence for guerrilla activities, the official Algerian news agency APS said on Monday. The court in Tizi Ouzou, 90 kilometres east of Algiers, convicted the nine men on charges of belonging to a Muslim guerrilla group and carrying out attacks on government security forces between 1993 and 1996. APS said. Two policemen were killed in an ambush in February 1996, the court said. Algerian law entitles those sentenced in their absence to re-trials if they are arrested by the authorities or if they give themselves up.

#### Yemen, Vatican set up diplomatic ties

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen and the Vatican decided on Monday to set up diplomatic relations at the level of ambassadors, the official news agency SABA announced. It said the decision was taken "to boost links of friendship" between the Vatican and the Muslim state. Yemen has two churches in which services are held, one Roman Catholic and the other Anglican, both in the southern port city of Aden which used to be a British colony. In July, three nuns of the late Mother Theresa's order were gunned down in Hodeidah on the Red Sea. Yemeni authorities said the assailant was a psychiatric patient, while other reports said he was an Islamist who fought alongside Bosnian Muslims in 1992.

#### Fires threaten Haifa for second day

HAIFA (AFP) — New fires broke out Monday around the Israeli port of Haifa, one day after a blaze caused an entire section of the city to be evacuated. Israel Radio reported. A fire broke out at a waste dump in a shopping centre, with warm winds quickly spreading the blaze to forests on neighbouring mount Carmel, near the town of Zikron Yaakov. Dozens of hectares of pine trees were wiped out before fire fighters, aided by fire fighting aeroplanes and helicopters, controlled the blaze. Several houses were evacuated and one person was briefly overcome by smoke inhalation. Three other forest fires also broke out Monday, two in Galilee and one in Jerusalem that the radio said was rapidly contained.

#### 'Most Iran prisoners held for drugs'

TEHRAN (R) — About 60 per cent of Iran's prison population were convicted of drug offences, the head of Iran's prisons said in remarks published on Monday. "Some 60 per cent of the country's 160,000 prisoners are drugs-related convicts," the daily newspaper Salam quoted Morteza Bakhtiari as saying. He said women, mostly serving sentences on drug charges, accounted for about five per cent of the total number of prisoners. Iranian officials say there are about one million drug addicts in a general population of 60 million.

#### Floods kill 14 in Iran

TEHRAN (AP) — Floods unleashed by heavy rains have killed 14 people in northern Iran, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported Monday. The floods, which occurred over the past few days in northern Gilan Province, also killed 500 livestock and damaged farms, roads, bridges and houses, it said. The damage was estimated at 50 billion rials (\$17 million).

## Iraq condemns Cohen's Arab Gulf states tour

BAGHDAD (R) — The Iraqi press condemned on Monday a tour by U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen to Arab Gulf states, saying his threats to use force against Iraq were "nonsense."

"During his tour to members of the Gulf Cooperation Council the Zionist American Secretary of Defence William Cohen spelled out threats against Iraq which were nonsense and empty," the official Iraqi newspaper Al Qadisiya said.

"Cohen and the rest of the Zionist crew who are managing the American foreign policy should not spell out such threats against a steadfast people led by an historic leader," the paper said.

Qadisiya said Cohen should know that the U.S. military build-up in the Gulf in February "had failed."

During a crisis between Iraq and the U.N. over weapons inspections earlier this year, the U.S. and Britain sent new military forces to the Gulf and threatened to strike against Baghdad if it did not comply with U.N. resolutions.

An attack was averted by an agreement clinched by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Iraq.

Cohen said in Bahrain on Saturday that the United States was "fully capable of carrying out any military option that might be required" if Baghdad did not renew free access for U.N. inspectors looking for weapons of mass destruction.

But he said that Washington hoped that Iraq would resolve the issue peacefully with the U.N.

Cohen arrived in Kuwait on Monday, and was due to fly to Saudi Arabia on Tuesday at the end of his six-day Gulf tour. He has already visited Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, the newspaper of the ruling Baath Party, Al Thawra, said. Cohen's threat to use force against Iraq was "silly and unjustifiable."

The paper said there was no need for such statements against Iraq at a time when an "agreement between Baghdad and the U.N. on resumption of weapons inspections in Iraq is possible."

## Palestinians dismiss charge of 'incitement' over killing

TEL AVIV (R) — The Palestinian Information Ministry on Monday said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policies, and not what he called Palestinian media incitement, spurred anti-Israeli violence.

Netanyahu told mourners at the funeral on Sunday of a 19-year-old Israeli woman soldier who was stabbed to death by a Palestinian that "words of hatred" by Palestinian media had contributed to her death.

"The real reasons for violence lie within the policy spearheaded by the Israeli prime minister," the information ministry said in a statement.

"This is represented by the daily killings... that are committed by his soldiers and settlers against Palestinians, land expropriation, settlement building, closures, and the destruction of the peace process that represented the way out of conflict," it said.

Netanyahu has set an end to anti-Israeli incitement in the Palestinian media as one of the conditions Arafat must meet in return for the transfer of 13 per cent more of the West Bank to Palestinian self-rule.

The Israeli soldier, Corporal Michal Adato, was stabbed to death by a Palestinian last Friday when she got off a bus at the entrance to the Jordan Val-

ley Jewish settlement of Tomer.

The Palestinian National Authority on Sunday said the killer, Imad Kmail, was psychologically disturbed. Kmail, 34, was shot in the legs by other Israeli soldiers after the stabbing and arrested.

The Palestinian information ministry said Netanyahu should pay more attention to Israeli media.

"Mr. Netanyahu should watch his country's media, which day and night are inciting racism, which fill Israeli public opinion with all the colours of hatred and led 65 per cent of the population to call for the expulsion of Palestinians," it said.

ANKARA (AP) — President Suleyman Demirel insisted Monday that Caspian Sea oil will be transported through Turkey, despite a report claiming that companies favoured a cheaper and shorter route.

"Baku-Ceyhan will be definitely constructed," Demirel told an oil conference in reference to a pipeline project running from the Azeri capital of Baku to Turkey's Mediterranean port of Ceyhan. "It is the safest route and has the backing of the United States."

Demirel's optimism conflicted with Sunday's report in The New York Times that U.S. efforts for the Turkish project appeared to be failing.

ing.

Azerbaijan's oil reserves in the Caspian Sea are considered to be the world's richest after the Middle East.

According to the newspaper, companies from the United States and seven other nations are expected to announce Oct. 29 that they will rely on a much shorter and cheaper pipeline already being built from Azerbaijan to the port of Supsa, on Georgia's Black Sea coast, or an enlarged pipeline along the same route.

From Georgia, the oil would be loaded into tankers and shipped through Turkey's narrow Bosphorus Strait, a proposal strongly opposed by Turkey for security concerns.

Energy Minister Cumbur Ersurmer said the report was totally baseless, private NTV television said. Ersurmer said Turkey will sign an agreement with Georgia and Azerbaijan this month, to allow the Turkish pipeline to cut through their territories.

The Turkish proposal foresees the construction of a 1,730-kilometre pipeline, via Georgia, capable of carrying 50 million metric tonnes of oil a year. It is expected to cost \$2.5 billion.

There have been nearly 50 oil tanker accidents in the last four decades in the Bosphorus, a narrow waterway that bisects Istanbul. In several cases, leaking oil

covered the waterway, causing it to be shut down to traffic for days. Thousands of tonnes of oil have spilled in the accidents.

"You can pump the oil and flush it out directly in the Mediterranean, which is a perfect market," Demirel said.

Washington has favoured the Baku-Ceyhan route because it would avoid crossing Iran, which has also proposed an alternative route.

Oil from Azerbaijan started flowing through a preliminary Russian pipeline last fall to Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiysk.

## London says Rushdie agreement stands

LONDON (AFP) — An agreement between the British and Iranian governments lifting the threat of a Tehran-sponsored assassination of British writer Salman Rushdie still stands, London insisted Monday.

The Foreign Office was speaking after an Iranian foundation increased to \$2.8 million the bounty on Rushdie's head, just weeks after moves by the two governments to put the affair behind them.

Iranian newspapers reported that the Khordad-15 foundation had offered an extra \$300,000 for the execution of the 1989 fatwa issued by the late Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini against Rushdie for his book "The Satanic Verses."

But in London on Monday a

foreign office spokesman insisted there was "no indication that that amount [offered] is in any way supported by the Iranian authorities."

Last month London announced it would restore full diplomatic relations with Iran for the first time since the fatwa was issued after Iran made moves to disassociate itself from the bounty.

Following a meeting with British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook in New York, Iranian Foreign Minister Kharazi pledged that Tehran had nothing to do with the Khordad-15 bounty and would take no steps to implement the fatwa.

The Foreign Office spokesman commented: "The agreement which was reached,

the understanding which has been reached by the British and Iranian authorities, as far as we are concerned, still stands."

He described the accord as a "clear breakthrough."

Also in London, Frances d'Souza, a friend of Rushdie and head of his support group, questioned whether Khordad-15 was truly a private foundation.

The foundation's director Ayatollah Hassan Sanei was a government advisor, she said, adding that Iranian sources had told her that if the foundation was ever to pay the bounty, it would need state assistance.

"Unless it expected to receive money from the government, I do not understand how it can offer the money," she said.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

#### PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 French Cartoon  
15:30 Banas in Pyjamas (Ep. 2)  
16:00 Life Choice  
16:30 Small Talk  
17:00 River of Life  
18:00 French Programmes  
19:00 Les Coeurs Brulés  
19:15 French Programme  
19:30 Fractales  
19:30 News headlines  
19:35 Step by Step — "We Are Going to Disney World" (pt. 2)  
20:00 What Would You Do?  
20:30 Drower's Gold (Ep. 2)  
21:05 You and your Car  
21:30 UN Cut  
22:00 News in English  
22:30 Lonesome Dove  
23:59 Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth  
01:30 End of T.C.

#### PRAYER TIMES

04:16 Fajr  
05:33 Sunrise/Duha  
11:22 Dhuhur  
14:38 Asr  
17:11 Maghreb  
18:28 Isha

#### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 463785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

### Terra Sancta Church

Tel. 4622366

### Anglican Church

Tel. 4624853/4624811

### St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church

Tel. 4771751

### Amman International Church

Tel. 5865897

### German-speaking Evangelical Congregation

Tel. 5688404

### The Evangelical Local Church in Amman

Tel. 5811295

### Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Tel. 4654932

### St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College

Tel. 5661757

### Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 4637440

### Greek Orthodox Church

Tel. 4646138

### Church of Presentation, Sweifeh

Tel. 5920146

### The Uniate Catholic Church

Tel. 4624757

### The English-Language Catholic Parish

Tel. 4614190

### Evangelical Free Church

Tel. 4892679

The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331

The American Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

It will be hot, dry, and dusty with temperatures rising significantly and winds southwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be hot and dusty, winds northerly moderate to active, and seas calm.

Amman 18/35  
Aqaba 24/40  
Deserts 15/36  
Jordan Valley 26/41

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 32, Aqaba 38 Humidity readings: Amman 17 per cent, Aqaba 26 per cent. Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajlun 26  
Jerash 32  
Um Qays 32  
Madaba 32  
Petra 32  
Dead Sea 38

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

#### NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:  
Dr. Khalid Asfour 5332600  
Dr. Awad Hawamdeh 5332350  
Dr. Tawfiq Qub'ain 4623029  
Dr. Ghaleb Zawiideh 4126011  
Al Asema pharmacy 4637055

Al Salam pharmacy 4636730  
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660  
Nairookh pharmacy 4623672

#### IRBID:

Dr. Lutfi Shalabi 341798  
Al Quds pharmacy (—)  
4637777

#### ZARQA:

Dr. Akram Haddad 985550  
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

#### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111  
Civil Defence Department 5661111  
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199  
Rescue Police 192 4621111  
4637777

Fire Brigade 4617101  
Blood Bank 4775121  
Highway Police 5343402  
Traffic Police 4896390

Public Security Dept. 4630321  
Hotel Complaints 5605800  
Price Complaints 5661176  
Water & Sewage Complaints 4897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121  
Overseas Calls 010230  
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101  
Jordan Television 4773111  
Radio Jordan 4774111

Water Authority 5680100  
J. Electricity Authority 5815615  
Electric Power Co. 4636381  
RJ Flight Information 44-53200  
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 44-53200

#### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199  
The Islamic, Abdli 5661317  
Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 5856856

Luzmila 4630195  
Khalidi Maternity 4642816  
Aklieh Maternity 4642412  
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362

Malhas, J. Amman 4636140  
Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071  
Shmeisani Hospital 5669131  
University Hospital 5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital 5667279  
Al-Ahli, Abdali 56641646  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4771013  
Al-Bashir 4775111/26

Army, Marka 4891611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50  
Amal Hospital 5674155

#### ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323  
Zarqa National Hospital

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)900560  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)99099

IRBID:  
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

#### FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
06:10 Tehran (RJ)  
06:30 Damascus (RJ)  
07:05 Sanaa (RJ)  
09:20 Abu Dhabi (RJ)  
09:40 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)  
09:45 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)  
10:25 Beirut (RJ)  
10:30 Aqaba (add) (RJ)  
16:00 Cairo (RJ)  
17:30 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)  
17:45 Kuwait (add) (RJ)  
18:00 London, Frankfurt (RJ)

Other Flights  
08:00 Cairo (MS)  
12:00 Riyadh (SV)  
12:30 Aden (TY)  
13:25 Munich (LH)  
14:00 Istanbul (TK)  
15:10 Bahrain, Doha (GF)  
15:10 Dubai (EK)  
17:05 Kiev (6U)  
18:00 Paris (AF)  
19:25 Tel Aviv (LY)  
21:30 Beirut (ME)  
22:35 Larnaca (CY)  
22:40 Amsterdam (KL)  
23:55 Bucharest (RO)  
02:00 Rome (AZ)  
03:25 London (BA)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights  
09:20 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)  
17:00 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)  
18:20 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA) (RW)  
22:25 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)

Other Flights  
06:25 Frankfurt (LH)  
09:00 Cairo (MS)  
13:30 Riyadh (SV)  
13:30 Aden (TY)  
14:15 Munich (YF)  
15:00 Istanbul (TK)  
16:20 Doha, Bahrain (GF)  
16:20 Dubai (EK)  
18:05 Kiev (6U)  
20:10 Tel Aviv (LY)  
22:55 Beirut (ME)  
23:40 Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)  
00:55 Bucharest (RO)  
03:00 Rome (AZ)  
05:35 Larnaca (CY)  
06:30 Paris (AF)  
08:20 London (BA)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights  
07:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)  
08:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)  
16:30 Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport) (RW)  
20:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
06:45 Beirut (RJ)  
08:00 Aqaba (add) (RJ)  
08:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)  
11:20 Vienna, London (RJ)  
11:35 Berlin, Frankfurt (RJ)

#### DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
06:45 Beirut (RJ)  
08:00 Aqaba (add) (RJ)  
08:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)  
11:20 Vienna, London (RJ)  
11:35 Berlin, Frankfurt (RJ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights  
07:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)  
08:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)  
16:30 Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport) (RW)  
20:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)



### Jordan seeks development benefiting, involving public sectors — Regent

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan seeks to create an environment conducive to a comprehensive and sustainable development involving and benefiting the country's various public sectors. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Monday.

In an address delivered on his behalf by Planning Minister Nabil Amrari at a seminar on adjusting national legislation to the requirements of the European Union, the Regent said the country hopes to achieve its international aspirations by building a strong national economy.

Prince Hassan noted that the Jordan-EU association agreement signed a year ago will become effective at the beginning of next year. In addition, Jordan is preparing to accede to the World Trade Organisation by the middle of 1999 and is negotiating to join the European Free Trade Association group.

"Through an exchange of expertise at this seminar, which will review Austria's experience as a case study in adapting and adjusting its legislation to meet the requirements of joining the European Union, Jordan will benefit a great deal," he said.

But the Regent added that "our aim should not be merely copying other countries' experiences, but rather benefiting from their experiences in a manner that is suitable for our needs and our economy."

"We have started modernising our legislation... out of our belief in a free market economy. The national legislative framework is coherent and strong and has become... suitable for the investment environment," he said.

Amman Chamber of Industry President Khalid Abu Hassan said the Jordan-EU association agreement, which was initiated in Brussels last year, will be formally signed in the coming year.



A PRAYER FOR KING HUSSEIN: Catholic patriarchs Monday pray for the recovery of His Majesty King Hussein at the opening of a five-day meeting in Amman. The meeting will discuss relations between Muslims and Christians in the Middle East. King Hussein is half-way through a series of six chemotherapy cycles which began on July 24 at the Mayo Clinic in the United States (Reuters photo)

### Court views precedent-setting video of alleged bombers' re-enactment

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The State Security Court on Monday set a precedent by allowing the screening of a video film in the courtroom showing alleged bombers re-enacting their crime.

Acting on a petition from the state prosecutor, the court agreed to review the video tape showing the 10 defendants, known by their group name, Reform and Challenge, re-enacting their alleged arson and bomb attacks against senior officials' vehicles, a police compound and other public facilities.

The 10 defendants, part of a group of 13, are accused of possessing, transporting and manufacturing explosives

with illicit intent, carrying out extremist attacks and belonging to an illegal organisation.

Three people facing the same charges are being tried in absentia.

The court also heard five prosecution witnesses, including three chemical and explosives experts, who provided testimony about flammable substances found at the scenes of the explosions.

The suspects were arrested in May following a series of arson and explosive attacks that targeted senior officials' vehicles, a kindergarten, a traffic police compound and the parking lot of an Amman hotel.

According to the prosecution charge sheet, some

group members met in 1994 and started attending religious lessons in their homes. They formed a group which they called "Reform and Challenge to change the reality in Jordan," the prosecution charged.

The suspects were arrested in May following several attacks which resulted in property damage but no injuries.

The military tribunal, comprising Judges Yousef Fauri, Tayel Raqad and Ahmad Ayash, adjourned the session until Wednesday.

**Psychiatrist referred to court for fraudulent prescriptions**

Meanwhile, the state prosecutor Monday referred a 50-year-old psychiatrist to the State Security Court on charges of writing fraudulent medical prescriptions for drugs, according to judicial sources.

The source said the psychiatrist, who the authorities would not identify, was arrested around 45 days ago after writing a medical prescription for an undercover police officer.

The authorities received a tip that the psychiatrist was writing prescriptions for Arine pills to drug abusers without performing a physical examination.

Sources said the psychiatrist was charged JD10 for each prescription.

### Vehicles' duty-free registration under government scrutiny

Action draws fire from foreign NGOs

By Amy Henderson

AMMAN — Minister of Industry and Trade Mohammad Hourani yesterday said his ministry was in the process of reviewing the registration of more than 400 vehicles licensed with yellow plates to determine which were registered to "legitimate" foreign companies operating in the country and whether or not new annual licensing fees would deter foreign investment in the country.

"One of the reasons we [adopted] the new licensing regulations is to weed out those [Jordanian companies] who have abused the law to get [duty free] cars," Hourani said.

The Cabinet last month hiked licensing fees for "yellow plated" cars — or duty-free cars — from a few hundred dinars to JD1,000-3,000. Hourani said "several" Jordanians had registered local companies as regional offices in order to import duty-free vehicles — a privilege reserved for foreign companies and non-profit organisations to encourage their presence in the country.

"Now, we are trying to see which companies are really foreign and which have been registered simply to exploit this benefit," he said.

The new regulations were met with an immediate round of criticism from foreign non-profit organisations and regional offices in Amman, who argue that the "exorbitant" increase is simply a customs tax masquerading as a licensing fee.

Regular customs tax on vehicles varies according to a car's make, model and engine size, and is usually more than 50 per cent of market value.

Ulrich Voigt, head of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, a German NGO, was quoted in an Arabic daily as saying that "if one is to follow [the government's] procedures logically, there is no way a person can understand the new licensing fees."

"If you bring a car in exempt from taxes but you have to pay a license fee of JD2,000-3,000, you are not really exempt from taxes, are you?"

A source from another German NGO said most NGOs

have agreements with the government exempting them from most taxes and fees, but he added that "it is not a small irony that these NGOs come to Jordan and contribute money to any number of projects, often at the request of the government, but they are then asked to pay for that 'privilege' over time."

"As usual, the government has written a new [regulation] without consulting anyone about what the effects of it might be, and now everyone is in a mess," he said.

The ability to import duty-free vehicles is also one of the main incentives in the investment promotions law offered to international companies to encourage them to establish regional offices in Amman. The Investment Promotion Corporation, responsible for recruiting badly needed foreign investment, also criticised the new regulations in a letter to the Cabinet last week.

"We understand that the government had its reasons for this regulation, but was it necessary to kill an investment incentive to get rid of the bad apples?" one IPC source said.

### Government exempts popular foods restaurants from sales tax

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government has decided to exempt popular restaurants selling falafel, hummus and fuul from paying a 10 per cent sales tax on their food.

A report Monday in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i said the decision was taken in response to demands by the Amman Chamber of Commerce and the General Union of Restaurant Owners, introduced to the Sales Tax Law on Oct. 1, 1998.

The committee recommended that the government exempt these foods from the

sales tax after determining that paragraphs 3 and 4 of article 15 of the 1995 Sales Tax Law were affected by the amendments.

According to the government's decision, fuul, hummus and falafel are considered basic commodities for limited-income groups and must therefore be exempted from the sales tax.

At least 3,800 popular restaurants will benefit from the government's decision, according to the report.

liar to examine the regulations providing for the sales tax on this kind of popular food.

The committee, which grouped representatives of the Sales Tax Department, the Amman Chamber of Commerce and the General Union of Restaurant Owners, examined amendments introduced to the Sales Tax Law on Oct. 1, 1998.

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### Final suspect in school attack taken into custody

By Munther Murjan

AMMAN — Police have taken into custody the last suspect involved in an attack against several staff members at a public school in Amman by the family of a student who was allegedly beaten up by a teacher, officials said Monday.

The six men involved in the attack at Ibn Bitar Elementary School last Wednesday will be tried on Nov. 5, they added.

"The whole incident resulted from an exaggerated response to an apparent misunderstanding," said Mashoor Kharabsheh, head of the Ministry of Education's First District department.

Tension soared after a teacher tried to push away three boys who were standing next to a truck delivering water to school. Kharabsheh told the Jordan Times.

"One of the three boys ran out of the

school and went to his brothers and relatives, who own a barbecue stand near the Yajouz main highway, and told them he was beaten up," Kharabsheh said.

"They came back with him, many with butcher knives, and insulted the staff before attacking some of them," he added. "The school's headmaster and a teacher received minor injuries."

Teachers at the school, which does not have a telephone, waited until their working schedule was over and personally reported the incident to Al Rashid police station.

The school was closed for a day after the attack, and teachers will make up for the lost day on Thursday.

"It [the closure] was necessary to calm things down. The students were greatly disturbed by the incident," Kharabsheh said.

Police have completed investigations into the incident, but the school

has yet to finish talking to all parties involved, including the student who allegedly instigated the incident.

The family of the student was not available for comment.

Officials and educators say incidents of school violence have been on the rise in Jordan in recent years.

They believe increasing poverty, unemployment and daily scenes of violence broadcast on television as well as family problems caused by a change in traditions and customs have contributed to the rising violence.

In many cases, however, trouble has brewed because teachers and schoolmasters have improvised to deal with certain situations instead of following a special disciplinary protocol set for schools. The controversial protocol among other things calls for transferring students to other schools or expelling them.

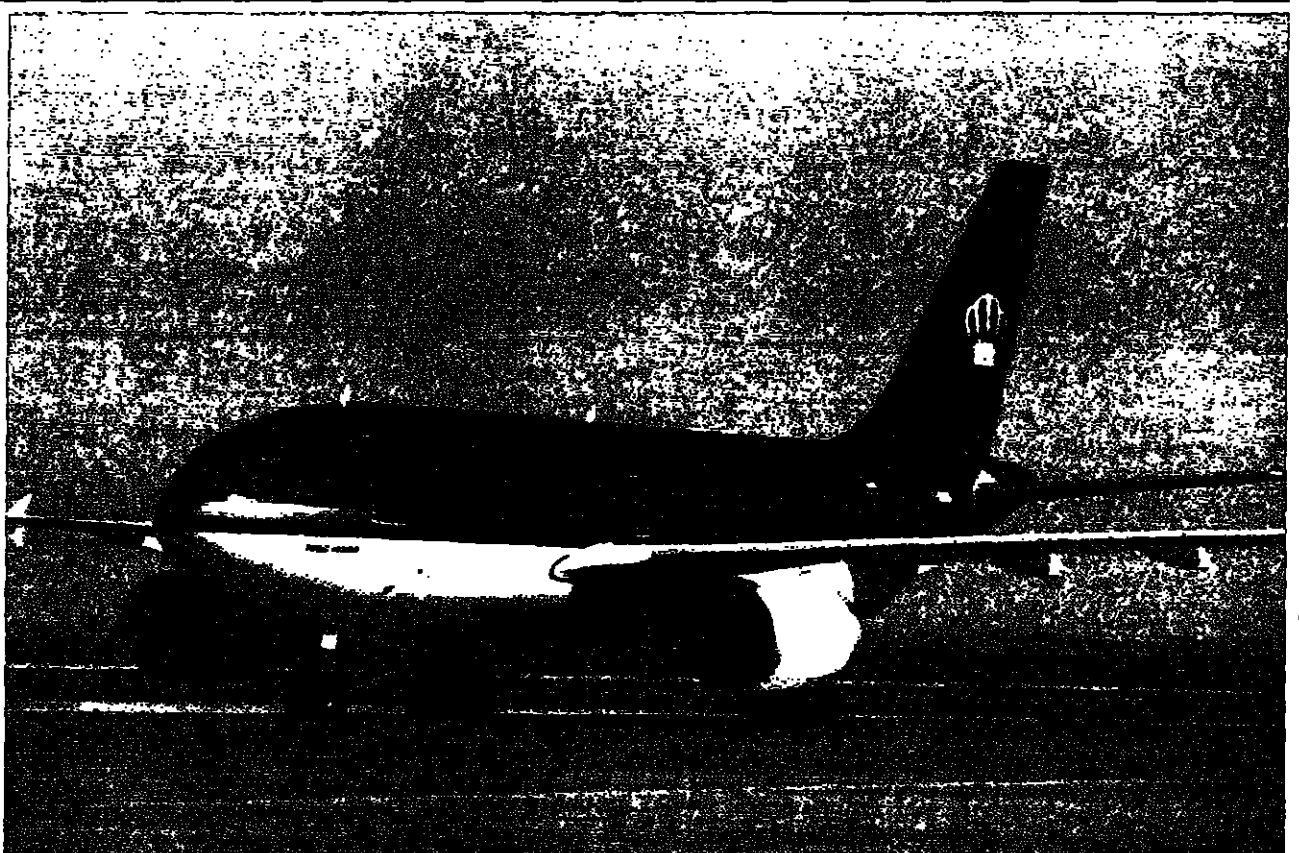
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Two agreements were signed yesterday under which Royal Jordanian will be restructured prior to its privatisation (File photo)

### Agreements on restructuring debt-ridden RJ in eight months

#### Two consortiums to carry out \$2 million project

AMMAN (J.T.) — Royal Jordanian on Monday signed agreements with two consortiums to financially, legally and technically restructure the indebted national airline in eight months at a cost of \$2 million, funded by the World Bank.

According to the deal, the French Banque Paribas working in conjunction with SHA, an American consulting agency specialised in civil aviation, and the British legal group Clifford Chance, together with British legal consultants Line and Partners and a local Jordanian legal firm, will design and implement a programme for restructuring and privatising RJ.

Matthew for the consultancy consortium, which won the deal in an internationally floated tender, will now embark on evaluating the airline's assets, restructuring the balance sheet, recommending ways to handle RJ's JD700 million debt, setting up a debt-free subsidiary and eventually selling off a major stake, between 40-60 per cent, of the new entity to a strategic partner.

Last month, the government gave RJ the go ahead to finalise the agreements.

The agreement, which was signed by the head of the Prime Ministry's Executive Privatisation Unit, Adel Qudah, and John Mitchell and Andrew

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tium, will lead to the creation of two companies.

The operating subsidiary will handle the aviation part of the business and will include the planes, routes and technical support.

The remaining operations of the airline, such as the duty-free shops, engineering and maintenance services and catering, will be part of a government-owned holding company which will represent the government's share in the new subsidiary.

The signing ceremony was attended by RJ's Chairman of the Board Walid Asfour, the airline's Chief Executive Officer Nader Dahabi and French Ambassador to Jordan Bernard Emie.

#### what's going on

**FILM**

- \* "Goya" (in English with commentary by Dr. Khalid Khreis) at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on Wednesday Oct. 14 at 6:30 p.m.
- \* "Sense and Sensibility" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m. (Another film entitled "Transformers and Headmasters" will be screened on Wednesday Oct. 14 at 5:00 p.m.)
- \* German film "Für immer und immer" (Always and Forever) at Goethe-Institut, Jabal Amman on Wednesday Oct. 14 at 7:00 p.m.

**THE PALESTINIAN HERITAGE WEEK**

- \* Seminars entitled "The Zionist Lies About the Islamic Heritage in Jerusalem" (in Arabic) with the participation of Mr. Ra'if Najm, Dr. Ali Abu Ghannimah, Dr. Ali Al 'Umm and Sheikh Ra'id Sabih (who will participate by phone) at the Professional Associations Complex (6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.).
- \* Song festival on Wednesday Oct. 14 at the Professional Associations Complex (6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.).

**LECTURE**

- \* "What is Psychiatry?" (in Arabic) by Dr. Mohammad Kan'an, Dr. Izz Al-Din Jamal, Dr. Suleiman Bani Sa'id at the City Hall, Ras Al 'Ain on Wednesday Oct. 14 at 6:00 p.m.

**EXHIBITIONS**

- \* Goya's Capricious paintings at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman (Tel. 4610858), until Oct. 23.
- \* Children's photo exhibition entitled "Al Hussein in the Eyes of Children" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Oct. 15.
- \* Exhibition on "Protection of Archaeological Heritage," a book exhibition, and children's art exhibition at the City Hall, Ras Al 'Ain, until Oct. 14.
- \* "International Motor Show 99" at the Amman International Motor Show, Airport Road (Tel. 571-4211), until Oct. 17.
- \* "Calligraphy on Crafts" at the Jordan Craft Centre (Al Aydi), Jabal Amman (Tel. 464-5555), October 18-31.
- \* Works by Lamin Jamal at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until Oct. 26.

#### NEWS IN BRIEF

**Regent offers condolences to tribes**

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday visited the Bani Hassan tribes in Mafrat to offer condolences to the Dughmi and Mashakha tribes over the death of Sheikh Faisal Dattulh Dughmi, a former deputy and father of Lower House member Abdul Karim Dughmi. The Bani Hassan tribes thanked His Majesty King Hussein and the Regent and wished the King a quick recovery. Prince Hassan was accompanied by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani, HRH Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid and Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khadib.

**Regent receives WIPO chief**

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Monday received the director general of the World Intellectual Property Organisation, Kamel Idris. During the meeting, which was attended by Minister of Culture and Youth Talal Sa'ar and Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Mohammad Saleh Hourani, Prince Hassan and Idris discussed a proposal to establish a regional WIPO office in Jordan.

**Agreement on French books in schools**

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Education and the French Cultural Centre Monday signed an agreement to reprint and publish a series of books to teach French at ministry schools. The agreement provides for revising and adapting the series to conform with the educational philosophy in Jordan and to take into account the traditions of Jordanian society. The agreement was signed by ministry Secretary General Izzat Jaradat and French Cultural Centre Director Denis Toupin.



# Nobel prize for discoverers of Viagra principle

STOCKHOLM (R) — Three U.S. scientists whose discoveries led to the use of the Viagra anti-impotence drug won the 1998 Nobel Prize for Medicine Monday.

Robert Furchgott, Ferid Murad and Louis Ignarro were awarded the 7.6 million Swedish crown (\$955,500) prize jointly for their discoveries about the role of nitric oxide — long considered just an air pollutant — as a signalling molecule in the cardiovascular system.

The discovery has applications for the treatment of cardiovascular disease, shock and possibly cancer, as well as impotence, said Sweden's Karolinska Institute, which awards the annual prize, one of the most prestigious in medicine.

Nitric oxide is a gas that transmits signals in the organism, allowing messages to be sent from one part of the body to another, and regulates blood pressure and blood flow.

"Signal transmission by a gas that is produced by one cell, penetrates through membranes and regulates the function of another cell represents an entirely new principle for signalling in biological systems," the institute said in its citation.

Furchgott, 82, a pharmacologist at the State University of New York (SUNY) in Brooklyn, established in 1980 that blood vessels dilate, or become wider, because their surface cells — the endothelium — produce an unknown signal molecule that makes their smooth muscle cells relax.

Furchgott's "ingenious experiment" led to a quest to identify the factor, the institute said.

Murad, 62, now a pharmacologist at the University of Texas Medical School in Houston, analysed how nitro-glycerine and similar substances affect vessels, and discovered in 1977 that they release nitric oxide, which relaxes smooth muscle cells.

Ignarro, 57, and now a pharmacologist at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Medicine, participated in the quest for the unknown signal molecule posited by Furchgott, and in a brilliant series of analyses, independently and with Furchgott, concluded it was nitric oxide.

"He (Ignarro) discovered the principle which led to the use of Viagra as an anti-impotence drug," Sten Orrenius, professor of toxicology at the Karolinska Institute, told Reuters.

Viagra, the product of research into cardiovascular disease, counters impotence by dilating the blood vessels in the penis. It is produced by Pfizer.

It was a sensation that nitric oxide, a simple, common air pollutant formed when nitrogen burns, for instance in car exhaust fumes, could exert important functions in the organism.

"When Furchgott and Ignarro presented their conclusions at a conference in July, 1986, it elicited an avalanche of research activities in many different laboratories around the world," the institute said. "This was

the first discovery that a gas can act as a signal molecule in the organism."

Further research results rapidly confirmed that nitric oxide is a signal molecule of key importance for the cardiovascular system — the heart and blood vessels — and other areas.

"We know today that nitric oxide acts as a signal molecule in the nervous system, as a weapon against infections, as a regulator of blood pressure and as a gatekeeper of blood flow to different organs," the institute said.

Found in most living creatures and made by many different cells, it controls blood pressure by dilating arteries, affects behaviour by activating nerve cells and when produced in white blood cells becomes toxic to invading bacteria and parasites.

Scientists are now testing whether it can be used to stop the growth of cancerous tumours.

The Nobel prizes were created by Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel, the discoverer of dynamite, who died in 1896.

Nobel was prescribed nitro-glycerine, one of the key components of dynamite to ease his chest pain when he contracted heart disease, but refused to take it, the institute noted.

"It has been known since the last century that the explosive nitro-glycerine has beneficial effects against chest pain," it said. "However, it would take 100 years until it was clarified that nitro-glycerine acts by releasing nitric oxide gas."



Actress Lauren Bacall arrives for the 4th annual International Achievement in Arts Awards in Beverly Hills. Bacall received 'The Legend Award for Lifetime Achievement in Film and on Stage' during the event, which benefited several charities, including the Whitney Houston Foundation for Children, Inc (Reuters photo)

## 'N. Ireland paramilitary disarmament still possible'

BELFAST (AFP) — Disarmament by Northern Ireland's paramilitaries is still possible, the British government insisted Monday after a Protestant group ruled out an early handover of weapons.

"I believe it is still possible," said Northern Ireland Secretary of State Mo Mowlam.

"But we have got to take it in small steps because nobody wants to make the first jump."

Mowlam was speaking after the political wing of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) made a weekend announcement that even "if the IRA decommissions, it doesn't mean the UVF will."

Billy Hutchinson, a leader

of the Progressive Unionist Party, told a party congress in Belfast on Saturday that "in no way will a timetable be formulated for decommissioning."

He added that the conditions for such a disarmament would be "a peaceful society" in which "the republican Sinn Fein in government."

He added: "Decommissioning is unrealistic before Oct. 31. But it may not be unrealistic in the coming years."

The recalcitrance of the UVF further undermines prospects of the province establishing a power-sharing government of pro-British rule Protestants and Roman Catholic nationalists by Oct.

31 as set out in the April peace deal.

Disarmament has become the major stumbling block in implementing the agreement, with moderate Protestants insisting that the IRA begin handing over weapons before it accepts its political wing Sinn Fein in government.

Sinn Fein has rejected the notion of any government seats being made conditional on IRA decommissioning.

The UVF, which declared a ceasefire in 1994, and the Irish Republican Army have waged a brutal war over the governance of Northern Ireland since 1969. Their political wings signed up to the peace agreement drawn up in April.

## Straps, straitjackets implicated in hundreds of deaths

HARTFORD, Connecticut (AP) — Restraints such as straitjackets and bed straps have caused hundreds of deaths in U.S. psychiatric and mental retardation facilities in the past decade, the Hartford Courant reported.

The restraints, supposed to be used only as a last resort, are commonly used for discipline or the convenience of staff at psychiatric and mental institutions, the newspaper reported Sunday.

The newspaper's investigation was prompted by the death of 11-year-old Andrew McClain, who died while being restrained in a Portland, Connecticut, psychiatric hospital in March.

The Courant said its investigation confirmed 142 restraint-related deaths, many involving children, since 1988.

The true death count may

be three to 10 times higher because many cases are not reported to authorities, according to a statistical estimate commissioned by the Courant.

The Courant also found: — 23 people died after being restrained in face-down floor holds such as the one in which McClain died.

— 20 died after they were tied up in leather wrist and ankle cuffs or vests and ignored for hours.

— Causes of death could be confirmed in 125 cases. Of those patients, 33 per cent died of lack of oxygen and another 26 per cent died of heart-related causes.

Health care officials say restraints are used less frequently and more compassionately than ever before.

"When it comes to restraints, the public has a picture of medieval things,

chains and dungeons," said Dr. Kenneth Marcus, psychiatrist in chief at Connecticut Valley Hospital in Middletown, Connecticut.

"But it really isn't. Restraints are used to physically stabilize patients, to prevent them from being assaultive or hurting themselves."

The federal government does not collect data on how many patients are killed by restraints. Neither do state regulators, academics or accreditation agencies.

The Harvard Centre for Risk Analysis put the estimate at between 50 and 150 deaths a year, based largely on data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and New York. The only state that investigates all deaths in institutions.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Prince Charles donates lithograph to aid N. Ireland hospital

DUBLIN, Ireland (AP) — Prince Charles has donated one of his own artworks to benefit the hospital that treated most of the victims of Northern Ireland's worst-ever terrorist attack. A signed and dated lithograph of one of the heir to the British throne's watercolours of Windsor Castle will be auctioned Wednesday in support of County Tyrone Hospital in Omagh, where an Aug. 15 car bomb planted by IRA dissidents killed 29 people and wounded 370. "This is the first time a piece of art by Prince Charles has been auctioned anywhere in the world, so we have not placed a reserve price on it," said John de Vere White, Dublin's premier auctioneer of fine art. He said Christie's London office had previously valued the lithograph at between £2,000 and £3,000 (\$3,400 to \$5,100), though he said its rarity combined with the special occasion was likely to attract a higher price. Charles visited the hospital and the bomb-ravaged town of Omagh three days after the attack. At the time, he noted that he understood what its residents were going through, since his own great-uncle, Lord Mountbatten, was assassinated by Irish Republican Army bombers in 1979. Charles' artwork will be sold alongside some 200 other donated works. Organisers expect the auction to raise at least £50,000 (\$85,000) for the hospital, which is facing likely cutbacks by the British government.

### 'Clinton will cut deal'

MADISON, Wis. (UPI) — Watergate scholar Stanley Kutler predicts President Clinton will cut a deal with congressional Republicans that will save his presidency. The University of Wisconsin historian told a weekend forum that the current White House scandal pales in comparison to the crimes committed in Watergate. Kutler says Clinton's affair with a White House intern is not about abuse of power, as was Watergate, and is not a "cancer on the presidency" — the description of the Watergate coverup coined by White House counsel John Dean. Kutler predicted Clinton and congressional Republicans will work out some kind of deal that will avert impeachment. He said Clinton's ultimate punishment will be a tainted legacy.

### Military administrator offers to do up Soyinka's home

LAGOS (AFP) — The military administrator of Nigeria's Ogun State has offered to do up the home of exiled Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka ahead of his anticipated return home, press reports said Monday. Navy Captain Kayode Olofinmoyin told Nigerian reporters that he would like to meet members of Soyinka's family to see about renovating the home of the exiled author. Soyinka, who won the Nobel prize for literature in 1986, fled the country in 1994 to escape the regime of the late dictator General Sani Abacha but said recently he is planning to return soon. Members of his family were not available Monday to comment on Olofinmoyin's offer.

### Australia to give aid to China's flood victims

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — Australia will provide Australian dollars 1 million (\$620,000) in assistance to China's flood victims, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said Monday. China is still cleaning up from the worst floods in almost 50 years, which claimed more than 3,000 lives and left tens of millions of people homeless. Downer said the money would be channelled to the flood victims through the United Nations' World Food Programme emergency relief operation. Australia's contribution is part of \$88 million (Australian dollars 143 million) fund being set up by the programme to address the immediate and essential needs of the most vulnerable flood-ravaged communities. "The World Food Programme has assessed 21 counties in China as being the most seriously affected, based on indicators such as the number of households evacuated, overall damage to dwellings, damage to farmland, livestock losses and per capita income," Downer said. "According to the programme's assessment, 56 million people in these 21 counties will be unable to return to their land until mid-to-late October and will then be without food or a source of livelihood until the next harvest in August, 1999." This year's floods in the Yangtze River basin in central China, the northeast province of Heilongjiang and Inner Mongolia, were the worst in five decades. Australia earlier provided Australia dollars 165,000 (\$102,000) during the July and August floods to assist Red Cross relief efforts.

### American mountaineer dies on the Himalayas

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP) — An American alpinist died on the slopes of Mt. Baruntse, the Nepalese tourism ministry said Monday. Raoul Willie, a 45-year-old businessman from Aspen, Colorado, died Sunday after suffering from acute high altitude pulmonary and cerebral oedema near the base camp at 4,300 metres, officials said. Willie was part of a 12-member group led by Richard Jackson, 48, of Basalt, Colorado, attempting to climb the 7,129 metres high Mt. Baruntse. Last week, a Greek mountaineer was reported missing on Mt. Dhaulagiri and has not been seen or heard from since then. The autumn mountaineering season on the Himalayas began Sept. 1.

### Norway to standardise its Christmas trees

OSLO (R) — Christmas trees are getting standardised in Norway, a nation largely blanketed by pine forests, as part of a battle to curb imports from neighbouring Denmark. Under the new three-class system, only straight trees with a single tip, regular shape and colour and free of artificial insecticides or fertilisers will be rated "first class. We want to rate our trees to guarantee quality for consumers and stimulate exports," Finn Hjalmar Andersen, spokesman of the Norwegian Standards Association, said Monday. "Christmas trees have never had standards before in Norway." Norway consumes 1.5 million trees a year but 500,000 of them are imported from Denmark. Trees grow better on Danish farmland and are cheaper to harvest than in Norwegian mountains. Under the voluntary guidelines, Christmas trees should be felled after Nov. 20 and have a label showing the date of harvest. Trees with curved trunks or uneven branches would be rated "third class". The association sets standards for everything from cycle safety helmets to food packaging. Next year it plans to set guidelines for earthquake-proof buildings — even though quakes hardly ever happen in Norway.

## China urges Japan to respect history

BEIJING (R) — China Monday reacted cautiously to indications that Japan would make a formal apology to Beijing for atrocities committed during its occupation of the mainland before and during World War II.

"China seeks to develop friendly bilateral ties with Japan based on the foundation of respect for history," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

"But first the Japanese side must correctly view and acknowledge history and sustain the course of peaceful development."

The statement came in response to a Japanese foreign ministry official's statement that Japan would offer a specific apology to China for wartime atrocities when President Jiang Zemin visits Tokyo next month.

The official said the apology would be the same as one issued to visiting South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung in a written declaration by Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi last Thursday.

The declaration said Obuchi "expressed deep remorse and extended a heartfelt apology to the people of South Korea" for heavy damage and

pain inflicted during more than three decades of colonial rule.

It was the first written apology Japan had issued to a country for its wartime actions. Previous statements of remorse were directed to Asia as a whole.

China's statement did not directly refer to Japan's apology to South Korea.

"During the war of aggression, the Japanese military caused great suffering to the peoples of China and other Asian nations," the Chinese foreign ministry said.

"A correct understanding of historical problems will help protect the political foundation of China-Japan ties. It will also promote understanding and confidence between Japan and its Asian neighbours," it added.

Japanese troops invaded China's northern region of Manchuria in 1931, beginning a bloody campaign to control the mainland that ended only with Japan's defeat in 1945.

One of the most infamous atrocities during the occupation was the 1937 massacre in the city of Nanjing. According to

Chinese estimates, Japanese soldiers killed 300,000 civilians in the city.

Japanese nationalists have denied that the incident occurred or have played down the number of people killed.

A commentary in the state-run China Daily Monday lashed out at Japanese who try to "whitewash" their war history.

"By trying to minimise their war crimes, the Japanese only generate distrust," the commentary said.

The editorial called on the Japanese government to study the example set by the European Parliament and punish people who trivialise wartime aggression.

The parliament last week stripped French far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen of immunity which would have protected him from standing trial in Germany for alleged anti-Jewish comments.

"The Japanese government can certainly prevent some die-hard rightists from undermining its sincerity by following the example set by Germany," the author concluded.

## Surviving New Zealand dinosaurs may have four sexes

WELLINGTON (AFP) — New Zealand's unique miniature dinosaurs, the tuatara, might have four different sexes, researchers said in a report Monday.

Molecular genetic researchers from three different universities have come up with the theory, according to Stephen Sarre of Massey University, Palmerston North.

Tuatara (sphenodon punctatus) are the only surviving member of an ancient line of creatures stretching back 225 million years.

Now up to 60 centimetres long, they inhabit a few areas of mainly off-shore islands, laying eggs and living for around 60 years.

Sarre, his Massey colleague David Lambert, Charles Daugherty of Wellington's Victoria University and Mike Thompson from Sydney

University, are investigating how sex is determined in tuatara.

Laboratory research found eggs of the common tuatara species, incubated at 22 degrees Centigrade produced mostly males, but incubated at 18 degrees Centigrade, the eggs turned into females.

Sarre told the Massey News magazine published Monday that studies of tuatara DNA found there

appeared to be differences in the genetic make-up of males and females.

If the difference was found to be significant, this would indicate the sex of tuatara was determined not only by temperature during incubation, but also by genetics and the interplay between the two.

Previous studies had shown they did not have obvious sex chromosomes so sex was not

determined by solely genetics.

"But if we find that there is a significant difference between male and female DNA, and that sex can be determined by temperature during incubation, then this would imply they could have four sexes," Sarre said.

"Males that are genetically male and look male: males that are genetically male, but look like females; genetic

females that look like females; and genetic females that look like males."

Until about 1,000 years ago, tuatara were scattered in great numbers throughout New Zealand's two largest islands but destruction of habitat and the arrival of humans, rats, cats, pigs and dogs meant it was now restricted to 25 remote, inaccessible islands around the coast.



IN BRIEF

donates lithograph  
to island hospital

Prince Charles has donated a lithograph to the Northern Ireland's women's and children's hospital in Belfast. The lithograph, which depicts a woman and child, was donated by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall. The hospital is one of the poorest in the world.

will cut deal

Watergate scholar says Clinton will cut a deal with his critics. The scholar, who has written extensively on the Watergate scandal, believes that Clinton will be forced to make concessions to his critics in order to survive in office.

administrator  
up Soyinka's home

The Nigerian administrator has been ordered to leave the home of the late Chief Awolowo. The administrator, who was appointed to the post by the military government, is accused of mismanaging the estate of the late Chief.

give aid to China  
and victims

AP — Australia will provide \$2 million in aid to China. The aid is intended to help China deal with the aftermath of the recent earthquake in the province of Sichuan. The aid will be used to provide medical supplies and other assistance to the victims of the disaster.

an mountaineer  
the Himalayas

AP — An American mountaineer has been killed while climbing in the Himalayas. The mountaineer, who was part of a climbing team, fell from a high peak while attempting to reach the summit. The death is a tragedy for the climbing community.

y to standardise  
christmas trees

AP — A group of people are trying to standardise the way Christmas trees are decorated. The group, which is called the "National Christmas Tree Decorating Council," has issued guidelines for how trees should be decorated. The guidelines include recommendations on the type of lights to use, the type of ornaments to use, and the way to arrange the decorations.

# Scalfaro starts consultations on new government

ROME (AP) — Three days after the collapse of the Northern League government, Italy's president began consultations on a new government. The president, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, is expected to announce the results of his consultations within a few days. The new government is expected to be formed by a coalition of the centre-left and the centre-right.

Scalfaro has named Prodi as caretaker premier for the interim.

Prodi's far-left ally, Communist Refoundation, provoked the crisis when it withdrew support for the government over the 1999 deficit-cutting budget.

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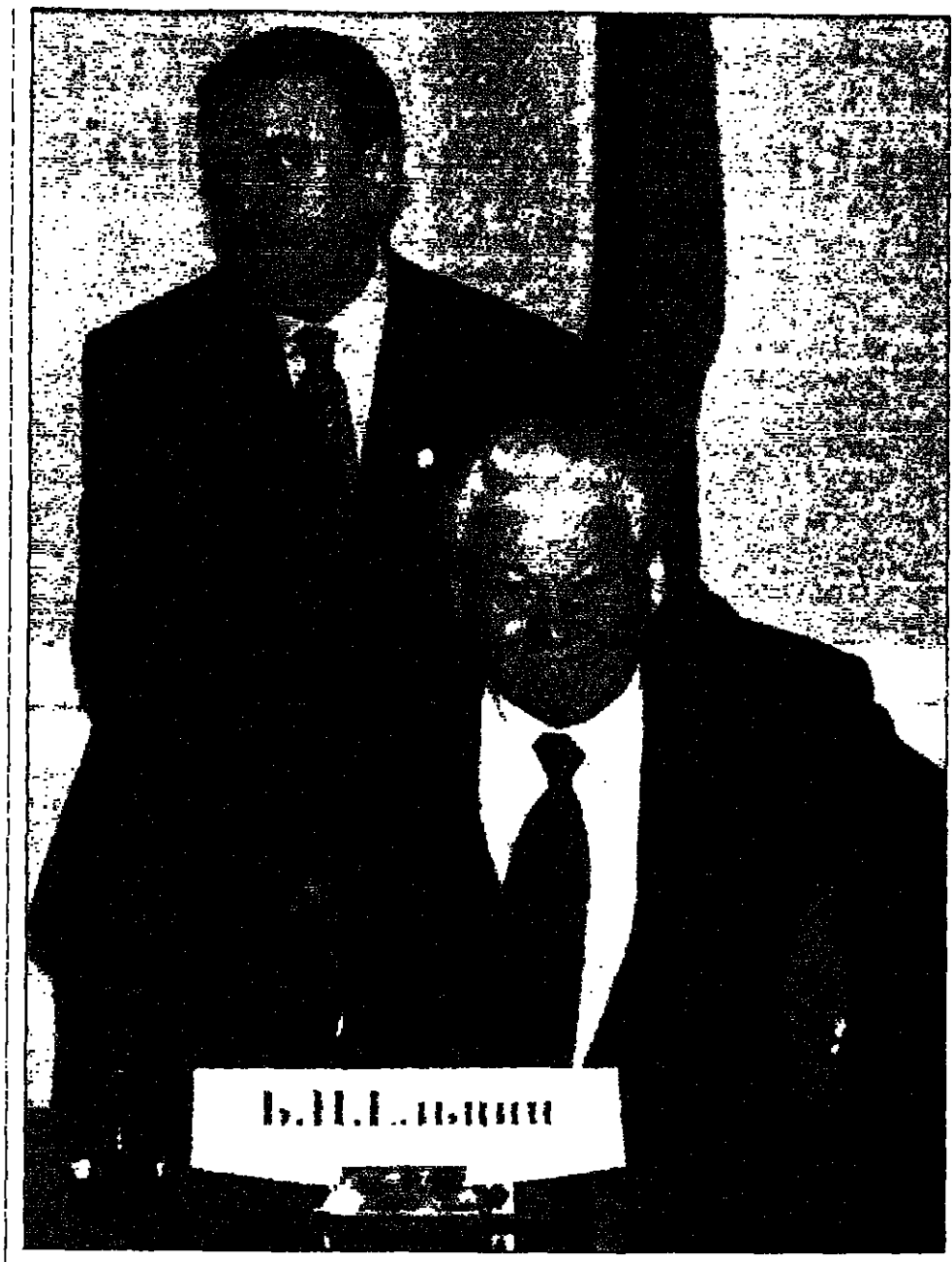
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Russian President Boris Yeltsin is assisted by one of his aides, Vladimir Shevchenko, as he takes his seat before a signing ceremony. Yeltsin signed a series of cooperation agreements with Uzbekistan Monday but his visit was overshadowed by doubts about his health after the Kremlin said he had caught a cold and his trip to Central Asia was cut short (Reuters photo)

# N. Korea to make peace talks fruitful, demands U.S. troop withdrawal

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea Monday said it would exert all efforts to ensure forthcoming peace talks are "fruitful," but reiterated an earlier demand for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea. The North Korean government said it was "deeply disappointed" that the U.S. had not agreed to withdraw its troops from the Korean Peninsula. The North Korean government said it was "deeply disappointed" that the U.S. had not agreed to withdraw its troops from the Korean Peninsula.

# FBI reports on Marxism — the Groucho kind


NEW YORK (AP) — He did more than smoke cigars and leer at women. He defended free speech and U.S.-Soviet friendship. He had opinions on everything from the New Deal to the United Nations. So when Groucho Marx wigged those eyebrows and cracked wise about the Establishment, a few Establishment eyebrows went up as well. Documents recently made public show the FBI kept detailed files on the comedian, ranging from his supportive quote about the Scottsboro Boys in the 1930s to jokes made on television in the '50s and '60s. With the unintentional humour of a Marx brothers villain, the bureau is still withholding several pages "in the interest of national defence or foreign policy." A fine way to treat the beloved leader of Fredonia — the country Groucho led in the film "Duck Soup."

# Yeltsin increasingly lame-duck president

MOSCOW (AFP) — Boris Yeltsin looked an increasingly lame-duck president Monday, forced by illness to cut short a Central Asian trip while an acute economic crisis at home has left him sidelined as Kremlin contenders jockey to replace him. On arrival in the former Kazakh capital Almaty, a spokesman for host President Nursultan Nazarbayev said the Russian leader would return to Moscow later Monday, a day earlier than planned. President Islam Karimov was forced to prop up his visibly ailing guest during an official welcoming ceremony in the Uzbek capital Tashkent Sunday, prompting renewed concern over the Russian leader's fragile health. Chief Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Yakushev had brushed off the incident, saying Yeltsin's "chill" was "nothing extraordinary." A Kremlin doctor later said the president had bronchitis. The downplaying echoed the "voice loss" Yeltsin was supposed to have suffered between the two rounds of the 1996 presidential election campaign, which later turned out to have been a heart attack. That brush with the grim reaper led Yeltsin to undergo a quintuple heart bypass that November. Plagued by a string of health problems since, his current condition comes as the country is battling to recover from an acute economic and financial crisis. "Yeltsin is weak physically, politically and intellectually, he is out of touch," said Andrei Piontkovsky, director of Moscow's Centre for Strategic Studies. The head of state's latest health scare will be grist to the mill of his opponents, including Communist Party boss Gennady Zyuganov and presidential hopeful Alexander Lebed, who continually demand his departure. A Yeltsin resignation ahead of scheduled presidential elections in 2000 was also a central demand of nationwide protests last week which brought hundreds of thousands of Russians onto the streets. The president has also appeared powerless to tackle an unprecedented financial and economic storm which erupted over the summer and pushed Russia's battered economy to its knees. His waning authority suffered a further blow when he backed down in a power struggle with the opposition dominated parliament, eventually accepting Yevgeny Primakov as a replacement to the sacked reformer Sergei Kiriyenko. "See for yourself" how the president runs the state's affairs, said a savagely ironic Yevgeny Kiselyov during Sunday's prime time political analysis programme on the commercial NTV channel. The presenter even compared Yeltsin with Russia's ill-fated Tsar Nicolas II, who was toppled by a revolution in 1917. "The president leaves for his dacha in the middle of the week, has scrapped his weekly radio broadcasts, lets the prime minister address the nation on the eve of the day of national protest," without saying a word, Kiselyov added. Yeltsin's popularity has shrunk to microscopic proportions, with only two percent expressing confidence in his leadership, and a bare one per cent saying they would vote for him in presidential elections, according to an opinion poll for NTV. The combination of political void and economic crisis has led to mounting calls for early presidential elections, something Yeltsin went out of his way to rule out last Thursday in the wake of the national protest. "The political establishment realises that Yeltsin will leave office before 2000, and the election campaign has started," commented Piontkovsky. The battle lines are already being drawn. Moscow's populist mayor Yuri Luzhkov, who said late last month that he was considering a tilt at the Kremlin, has sought to build a centre-left coalition with trade union support. Ex-premier Viktor Chernomyrdin has meanwhile called for a centre-right bloc to contest the polls, in competition with the other contenders Alexander Lebed, Zyuganov and liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky.

# Alleged sex offender seen with murder victim on her last day

CHICAGO (AP) — A man charged with assaulting three young girls was spotted walking with an 11-year-old girl on the day her killing led to the arrests of two small boys, an attorney said. The witness, a 15-year-old girl from Ryan's neighbourhood, picked out Floyd Durr's photo from a police lineup Friday, according to attorney R. Eugene Pincham. Pincham represents one of the two boys, ages 7 and 8, originally charged with killing Ryan, whose body was found July 28 in a weedy, vacant lot in the Englewood neighbourhood, on Chicago's South Side. Durr, 29, is accused of raping a 14-year-old at gunpoint in a stairwell Jan. 8, raping a 10-year-old girl on her way to a store Jan. 14 and sexually assaulting an 11-year-old girl in an abandoned building May 20. All of the attacks were in Englewood. Pincham said he learned of Durr's identification from family members of the teenage witness. Chicago police spokesman Pat Camden declined to comment. Durr, who has not been charged in Ryan's death, was denied bond in the three assault cases and is being held at the Cook County Jail. The Chicago Tribune, quoting unnamed police sources, reported Sunday that DNA testing of material on Ryan's underwear links Durr to the killing. According to the sources, Durr admitted he performed a sex act over the girl's body after she had been killed but denies killing her. Ryan's killing drew international attention when the two young boys were charged. The charges were dismissed Sept. 4 after semen was found in the girl's underwear and medical experts said it was highly unlikely that boys so young could produce semen. Assistant public defender Catherine Ferguson, who represents the 7-year-old, noted that despite the DNA evidence and the dropping of charges, police have refused to say that the two boys had nothing to do with the killing. "Maybe now the police will admit they made a mistake," Ferguson said.



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### Make or break summit

MUCH HOPE is being pinned on U.S. President Bill Clinton's upcoming peace talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Washington, but the chances of a real breakthrough remain distant. As it is, we are off to a bad start with Ariel Sharon as the new Israeli foreign minister remains adamant that he will never shake hands with Arafat.

But more serious is the wide gap that separates the two sides on many issues. According to one Israeli source, "nothing is ready," meaning that disagreement between the two sides still persists on several fronts. Arafat offered the same assessment when he said on the eve of his final meeting with his cabinet in preparation for the summit that "until now, nothing has been achieved." Against this backdrop, it is hard to see how President Clinton can still clinch a deal from the two leaders.

The initial euphoria was triggered when Netanyahu accepted in principle the U.S. proposal to withdraw from another 13 per cent of the West Bank. But so many conditions were attached to this consent that rendered its endorsement abstract. What seems to still divide the two parties is not only the extent of the third phase of redeployment and the abolition of anti-Israeli clauses in the PLO Charter but also a string of other formidable matters especially security issues.

In order for the Washington summit to succeed, the parties need long-promised actions from the Israeli side. If Sharon's new role is to stop Netanyahu from going ahead with his acceptance of another 13 per cent withdrawal, then the summit is doomed before it even starts. If Sharon on the other hand, is meant to protect the political flank of Netanyahu from Israeli hardliners in his cabinet, then there could be a positive surprise in the offing. In any case, the world will soon discover where the peace process is destined.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek said pegging any currency with the U.S. dollar creates confidence in this currency, limits inflation and stabilises the economy. The Jordanian dinar is stable because it has been pegged to the dollar since 1995, and the Central Bank has continued to change 1.41 dollar for each dinar. According to Fanek, the confidence created by this decision has increased demand on dinars and the Central Bank's reserve. Jordan's economy was able to stabilise the dinar even during bad economic growth. Imports and prices of 1997 dropped to 2.2 per cent, while exports dropped to 2.9 per cent. These percentages were small and did not cause inflation to rise.

Al Ra'i's Tareq Masarwah said that nothing has changed after the U.S. secretary of state visited the region, and he predicted that nothing would change after the Washington summit. The worst aspect of Israeli policies is its confidence that peace can only be achieved through Palestinian concessions. It is a "silly" policy, said Masarwah, because it does not guarantee equal rights to both parties. Israel cannot impose a political or an economic situation upon Palestinians who have proved that they cannot be turned against their national convictions, the writer said, and added that peace cannot be achieved by blackmail or brute force.

### View from the Fourth Circle

## From Palestine to Kosovo: Life's tough lessons

Rami G. Khouri

KOSOVO — THAT ugly pit of intolerance and inhumanity — is the place that Palestinian, Israeli and American leaders should fix their gaze upon this week, while they meet near Washington to negotiate Arab-Israeli peace. Why Kosovo? Because in every imaginable and relevant way — in terms of deliberate intent and baphazard events, cruelty and suffering, politics and nationalism, international legality and diplomacy, war-making and peace-making, territoriality and humanity, human courage and fear, aggression and reconciliation — Kosovo is a shocking reminder of what happened between Zionist Jews and Arab Palestinians in Palestine in 1947-48. The powerful moral principles and legal dictates being invoked to resolve the Kosovo and Bosnia refugee problems could also enrich attempts to resolve the Palestinian-Zionist struggle, and its wider Arab-Israeli conflict.

The most important common aspect of the Palestine/Israel, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo conflicts, is the manner in which hundreds of thousands of civilians who had lived in these lands for centuries suddenly found themselves as hapless refugees. Exact figures about the Balkan refugees are contested — as they were in Palestine half a century ago (!) — but seem to number about 1.8 million from the Bosnia war, and 300,000 to 400,000 in Kosovo this year. Nearly one-fourth of Kosovo refugees are in neighbouring countries, while three-fourths are refugees in their own land. Slightly less than 500,000 of the 1.8 million Bosnian refugees have returned to their country, but most have not returned to their own homes in areas where they would be a minority. Two points to ponder about all this:

a) The Balkan refugees resulted partly from some deliberate "ethnic cleansing" by Serbs, but predominantly as a result of the natural, self-preserving human tendency to flee when fighting is taking place nearby — when you can hear simultaneously the explosions of approaching artillery and the frightened whimpering of your own children and family in your own vulnerable home. Large-scale abandonment of towns and villages, often accelerated

by stories of atrocities and mass killings, is biological, not ideological; normal, not abnormal; and unfortunate — but reversible. The phenomenon of civilian refugee flight happened in Palestine then precisely as it happens in Kosovo now. If you're not sure how it happens, you can watch it every day on television. Regardless of differences between the Serbs and Zionists, the fleeing ethnic Albanians in Kosovo now and the Arab Palestinians who fled their homes in Palestine then both acted according to identical human motives. Both must enjoy the same rights of repatriation, restitution, or compensation, if their lands and people are to enjoy lasting peace, reconciliation and coexistence.

The U.S. secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, reminded us of this pivotal principle last month, when she visited Sarajevo and spoke about the need to speed up the return of Bosnian refugees to their homes: "This is a tough challenge, but it must be met... There can be no just peace in Bosnia unless Sarajevo is an open city — a centre of life and culture, as well as government, for all Bosnians."

We should applaud Albright's dual stress on the right of the Bosnian refugees to return home, and the importance of rehabilitating capital cities as vibrant and tolerant multi-ethnic realities. This is forceful, righteous American political morality at its best — but is it universally valid, or selectively applied only to chosen refugees? Why is the same standard of justice not applied in other shared capitals (say, for example, Jerusalem in Israel/Palestine)? Another tough challenge for Madeleine to ponder on those long flights for justice and righteousness.

b) The intense global focus on halting Serbian militarism and allowing refugees in Bosnia and Kosovo to return home is admirably backed up — now and then, sometimes a bit late — by collective global action, both diplomatic and military. We see this in Kosovo this week. It is very moving, highly appropriate, but still questionable as to its ultimate effectiveness — if the legacy of

Bosnia and Palestine are anything to judge by. United Nations resolutions with the same legal validity as the resolution creating the state of Israel demand that the Palestinian refugees of 1947-48 enjoy the right of repatriation or compensation. This fundamental human right has not been implemented. The world has spoken with righteous feeling for the Palestine refugees, but acted only with a terrifying brand of moral irresoluteness and crass ethnic discrimination — a sort of ethnic cleansing of the diplomatic soul.

The result: half a century later, the American president must personally host a tea party in his house, attempting to resolve the Palestine refugee problem.

The lesson: innocent refugees who flee war zones in times of conflict will not quietly disappear or repatriate in other lands, but must have their full human rights implemented.

Civilian refugees will expand in number over time and their problem will prove more complex to resolve (the original Palestine refugees were somewhere around 750,000; today they are nearly five million, and still increasing). Their insistence on achieving their rights will sharpen and intensify with time, as will their personal identities and their political militancy. (Listen up, Bibi and Arik, it's anecdotal time: when I recently, separately, took two teen-aged relatives for their first visits to Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem, they both had only one request at the end of each visit: they asked for Palestinian flags to hang in their rooms. End of anecdote.)

Kosovo is testimony to the fact that some things never change, some people never learn. Will this week's Washington meetings for peace-making in Palestine/Israel compound history's refugee tragedies, or resolve them in a fair and mutually acceptable manner?

As we keep one eye on Kosovo and another on Washington this week, we should cheer hard for the mobilisation of the soldiers of righteousness — for all humankind, and not only for selected chosen refugees. Madeleine is right: it's a very tough challenge, indeed.

## The American Judeo-Christian Club and the politics of exclusion

By Mike Hoss  
 Arab American Mirror

WHILE SEEMINGLY innocuous, the context in which the term "Judeo-Christian" has been used recently in the American right-wing intelligentsia is anything but benign. With the aid of Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and other prominent Christian fundamentalists the term has devolved into a political device of exclusion to separate "us" from "them" and to promote the distasteful politics of cultural superiority disguised as religion. Not surprisingly, leaders of this members-only club are overwhelmingly right-wing white Christians and Jews, and few token minorities. Rarely will Arab or South African Christians, for example, be admitted to the American Judeo-Christian club. The political and social criteria of this suspect version of Judeo-Christianity precludes the universality of such a term. The term's use purposely excludes those whose political objectives do not align with the American political or religious far right. An Arab American or African American who rejects Israel's violence against Palestinian and Lebanese civilians and its violations of international laws is automatically excluded from the Judeo-Christian umbrella regardless of faith. How convenient.

The definition of this neo-Judeo-Christian tag in itself is amorphous. It's neither scientific nor legal. Its connotations are culturally understood, with a wink. It can be defended openly in harmless terms when need be. Therein lies the term's attraction to a growing minority who see a need to flaunt this divisive label to distance themselves from "others" without incurring the wrath of a politically correct culture.

This desire for cultural "ranking" is not new to the American right. If it were not the Arabs or Muslims, it would have been the Irish Catholics. And if it were not the

Irish Catholics it would have been the Blacks, Natives, Chinese, Mormons, and so on. This resistance to inclusion is a time-honoured tradition and today what Arabs, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others are enduring is a manifestation of the American right's aversion to tolerance. For obvious political reasons having to do with the Israeli occupation, Arabs and Muslims are bearing the brunt of this calculated exclusion.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, Islam is deeply grounded in orthodox Judeo-Christian values and does not clash with its core values. Adherents to Judaism and Christianity together form the People of the Book who are the only two religions accorded additional reverence by Muslims. Admittedly, as with all religions, Islam has also been a victim of comparable political abuse.

Much to the American exclusionists' dismay, all three Abrahamic religions are by-products of Semitic cultures, norms, and values of the Middle East, not the West. Moses and Jesus were as blond and blue-eyed as much as Mohammed was blond and blue-eyed. Only in Hollywood Jesus turns Nordic. Mohammed was a descendant of Abraham just as Moses and Jesus were. All write from right to left. Attempts to depict Judeo-Christian values as Western and separate it from its Eastern roots are grossly revisionist.

Those who wave the revisionist Judeo-Christianity card ignore the simple fact that only a minority of American Christians and Jews live up to orthodox values and dictates of the three religions such as the Ten Commandments. What is Judeo-Christian about engaging in common practices such as premarital sex, usury, gambling in Las Vegas, and starving children in Iraq? This is anything but Judeo-Christian or Islamic. While not necessarily contradictory, there is nothing Judeo-Christian or Islamic about democracy, human rights, and separation of church and state. To the

contrary they were simply tools to protect against the abuse of power and religion.

Going back in time, was slavery and genocide Judeo-Christian? Absolutely not. Was democracy and liberal thought Judeo-Christian? Not from a Spanish Inquisitor's perspective. So what does it mean to belong to the right-wing Judeo-Christian Club. Is it to justify Israel's transgressions in biblical terms? What about Christians who refuse to do so, are they anti-Semites and unchristian? To the contrary.

The Judeo component of the white American Christian club is a politically convenient addition. After all, anything perceived as purely white American Christian would appear too supremacist and could incur the wrath of a powerful Jewish establishment. So they have invited the American Jewish right who welcomed this separation from other Semites, the Arabs, and are delighted to parrot the exclusionist mantra that once led to their own exclusion and resulting violent anti-Semitism. What strange bedfellows.

It is easy to unwittingly engage the exclusionists in a debate on their own terms. Exclusionists must be denied the opportunity to be treated as spokespersons of Judaism or Christianity. The debate should not be one of religious differences. It should be positioned as a debate between an intolerant camp and another which is accepting, enlightened, and truly representative of divine values.

Exorcised of any self-serving political agenda, Judeo-Christian values include universal values few can argue with. But as always, heavenly dictates fall prey to man's imperfections. As long as the American mainstream remains a bastion of liberal values, the forces of division will be checked regardless of the misleading banners they often hoist.

The writer is a columnist for the Arab American Mirror which is devoted to Arab American affairs and the Middle East.

### What utter rot!

To the editor:

I READ with astonishment Mr. Fahed Fanek's article entitled "The cost and benefit of a strong dinar." The writer's stated intention, as the title clearly shows, was to show the pros and cons of a monetary policy that aims to maintain the convertibility of the Jordanian currency at the current fixed exchange rate vis-a-vis the U.S. dollar. But it quickly became clear that his real purpose was to show his strong preference for maintaining the present policy which lead him to ignore the costs of the policy and concentrate on the so called benefits while hinting that those who are beginning to question its wisdom have self-serving motives.

The simple fact is that a strong dinar can only be achieved by maintaining an outrageously high rate of interest on the dinar, as indeed has been prevailing in the last few years, which can only have devastating consequences for the economy. Some sectors may initially suffer more than others, while others may even reap some short-term benefit. But in the end very high interest rates will only choke the whole economy, including the national currency, whose value is ultimately determined by the strength of the economy rather than short-term monetary measures. This monetary policy must be recognised as a leading cause of the deepening economic depression that continues to take such a high human toll, as even the most conservative figures clearly show. I don't know how Mr. Fanek dares to invite the Jordanian people to congratulate themselves for the success of a policy that was, at least partially, responsible for their present predicament.

The monetary sector plays a supporting role in the economy. Monetary tools, such as interest rates, and currency exchange rates, are manipulated by governments to help them achieve their economic and social objectives. These tools should never be confused with the ends they are designed to help attain, surpass them in importance, or take their place and become ends to be achieved independently. It is this kind of confusion that leads Mr. Fanek to write "the Jordanian economy was able to maintain the exchange rate of the JD vis-a-vis the dollar even when its growth rate was a historical low of less than one per cent." This is seen as an achievement since the main objective is the exchange rate while the growth rate of the whole economy — a record low — is secondary. Also any causal relationship between the strong dinar and the dismal performance of the economy was not emphasised, not because it is not there, but because it is not very relevant since the dependent variable (economic growth) was not the priority.

Economists do not tell society what its priorities should be. Their qualifications merely enable them to help society attain the goals it sets for itself. The present Jordanian government responded to the wishes of the Jordanian people by making poverty and unemployment top priority of its programme. An economist of Mr. Fanek's calibre would serve his society better by helping the government attain the priorities it has already committed itself to achieve, rather than advice it to brush them aside and concentrate instead on the strength of the Jordanian dinar.

Radwan R. Abdullah,  
 Amman.

## Another empty bluff in Kosovo?

By Gwynne Dyer

"THEY STRIPPED one woman and cut off her ears, nose, and fingers," said a farmer who watched from hiding as the Serbian police massacred eighteen members of the Delija family, ranging from 18 months to 95 years old, outside the village of Gornje Obrinje last week. "They cut into her genitals with a knife. She was still moving. After a while they shot her."

There have been massacres like this every week in Kosovo since last spring, as "Yugoslav" forces (i.e. Serbs) systematically destroyed hundreds of villages in order to crush the separatist movement in the 90 per cent Albanian province. (All that remains of "Yugoslavia" is the Serb-populated areas and Kosovo.) The only difference this time is that foreign reporters saw the physical evidence only hours afterwards. But it could make a big difference.

A higher-tech but equally televised massacre in August 1995, when Bosnian Serbs rained 120mm mortar shells into the market square of Sarajevo, killing 37 people for no reason except spite, was the last straw for Western public opinion in Bosnia. "The brutal stupidity of the Bosnian Serbs," wrote American negotiator Richard Holbrooke, "had given us an unexpected last chance to do what should have been done three years earlier."

So NATO air strikes were unleashed against the Bosnian Serb forces besieging Sarajevo, and their sponsor in Belgrade, Yugoslav dictator Slobodan Milosevic, lost his nerve. The Dayton peace agreement that followed was far from perfect, but because of it tens of thousands of people are alive who would otherwise be dead.

Now horrific pictures again show the world what the Serbs are doing, this time in Kosovo, and hope is rising that NATO will make the killing stop. Last week U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen warned of NATO intervention "within two weeks." But does NATO mean it, or is it just playing tough until public outrage recedes?

The history is not promising. Last spring, when the Serbian offensive in Kosovo began, NATO sources in Brussels promised that there would be "no failure to engage early and assertively" this time. In June, British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook declared that "this is (Milosevic's) last warning." But nothing happened.

Nothing is what may happen again. As British Prime Minister Tony Blair said last week: "What President Milosevic thinks is that he can carry on, engaging in these atrocities, and then withdrawing, each time taking us to the brink and then drawing back, so that it saps the will of the international community."

Well, it worked in Bosnia for four years, it has already worked in Kosovo for six months — and here it comes again. On September 28, even before the massacre at Gornje Obrinje, Serbian Prime Minister Marko Marjanovic declared that "peace reigns in Kosovo today." In a few more days the Serbian tanks and artillery did fall silent, leaving four-fifths of Kosovo's villages still standing and only 300,000 of its two million people without shelter.

The rest of the de-bussing programme, the Serbs reckon, can be put off for a few months until the present spasm of outrage blows over. What are the odds that the Serbian calculation is correct?

Belgrade can no longer rely on Douglas Hurd, the former British foreign secretary who sabotaged every plan for NATO action in Bosnia for years. Hurd has retired to his lucrative reward as a merchant banker advising on privatisation in Serbia — he has personal access to Milosevic himself, of course — and the British government now leads the pack in urging action on Kosovo.

In their favour, however, the Serbs have a paralysed White House, a new coalition government in Germany whose foreign minister may be a pacifist Green, and a raging global economic crisis that is using up most of the available political attention. So NATO may well chicken out again — and even if it does launch air strikes against Serbian forces in Kosovo, the story is far from over.

Milosevic would pretend to cave in, but air strikes alone would just let him play to the Serbian martyr complex without shaking his grip on Kosovo. Only NATO ground troops can really end the war in Kosovo — but as in Bosnia, all the NATO governments are terrified of the casualties that using ground troops might involve.

Unaccompanied air strikes might lead to "peace talks" between Belgrade and some group of Kosovo Albanians, but they would not shake Milosevic's grip on Kosovo. Hundreds of aid

officials would arrive to feed and shelter the hundreds of thousands of people that Milosevic has made homeless, but that would just mean that the West was picking up Belgrade's bills — and it would provide hundreds of hostages for the Serbs if anyone ever mentions air strikes again.

Milosevic's long-term prospects for holding onto Kosovo, after all the massacres, are as slim as Russia's were in Chechnya, but an ineffective NATO intervention would just prolong the misery. Since the overwhelming majority of Kosovo Albanians will now accept nothing short of independence, the war would still drag on to its inevitable conclusion years later — by which time tens of thousands of lives and most of the homes in the province will have been destroyed. Like Chechnya. Like Bosnia.

Or NATO could do things right this time, and follow up air strikes with enough troops to evict the Serbian forces and establish a Western protectorate over Kosovo until its future can be democratically determined — probably independence, with constitutional protection for the tiny Serb minority — when things settle down in some years' time.

It would be an entirely feasible strategy, since the Serbian forces would almost certainly crumble when faced with regular troops; apart from its other effects, a constant diet of looting and torture destroys military discipline. Nobody would object except the Russians and the Greeks, neither of whom is in a position to intervene, and all Kosovo's immediate neighbours would support it.

But is it going to happen? Of course not.



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## Features

# A Bible publisher sought publicity and, lo, he found controversy

By Clare Garner

CHRISTIAN BOOKSHOPS in the United Kingdom are boycotting a new mini Bible series because they believe that the introductions by famous authors are blasphemous.

The Pocket Canons, have upset Christians who object to personal interpretation from atheists, a Jew and a Buddhist, being printed alongside the text of the Authorised King James version of the Bible.

Will Self's description of Revelation as "a sick text", Louis de Bernieres' conclusion that God is either "a mad, bloodthirsty, and capricious despot" or the Devil, and Blake Morrison's portrait of Jesus as "self-assured, pushy, and somewhat dislikable" have been singled out as the worst offenders.

Paul Slennett, who resigned as the sole religious distributor of The Pocket Canons when he realised their content, has launched a campaign to have the licence revoked. If the Scottish Bible Board, the crown body that issued the licence allowing the publisher to use the King James version, does not reverse its decision, he plans to appeal to the Queen of England.

Over the next two weeks, he will be sending out letters to about 18,500 ministers from the main Protestant denominations, urging them to

complain to Jamie Byng, managing director of the publisher Canongate Books, in Edinburgh, as well as mainstream bookshops which are stocking the series.

"Canongate has treated the Bible as a great work of literature, which it is, but to Christians it is more than that. It is the inspired word of God and it needs to be treated with respect," said Mr. Slennett, 51, an evangelical Christian.

John Shearer, secretary of the United Protestant Council, a federal body representing 20 Christian organisations in the U.K., fully supports Mr. Slennett's campaign. "This is the worst bit of blasphemous libel we've ever seen in this country," he said recently. Mr. Slennett added: "Why get someone like Will Self, who abominates Revelation, to write the introduction to a book of the Bible? Why ask a Buddhist when there are a million Christians who could write about Proverbs?"

But to Mr. Byng, who rescued his small publishing house from bankruptcy four years ago, stunts and shock tactics are the name of the game. "The general trade is going bad time on it," he said, adding that The Pocket Canons is one of Books Etc's — a major retailer — top 10 titles for Christmas.

Of his Christian critics, Mr. Byng — stepson of the BBC chairman, Sir Christopher Bland — said: "I think it's so exciting for the Bible to

be published in this way and I find it very sad that they're taking this fundamentalist approach.

"The bottom line is that the King James version stands there unchanged. Surely they must

particular religious baggage saying we shouldn't have done it.

"They're ludicrous. Some of the letter coming in about what's going to happen to us. This apocalyptic language — find it quite difficult to take seriously."

To Christians, however, what is offensive is the fact that the introductions are printed alongside the texts of the 12 books (price £1 each) selected from the Old and New Testaments.

Mr. Shearer explained: "It's almost deliberately seeking to devalue what orthodox Christians everywhere would regard as the infallible, true word of God under which we humble ourselves. These authors have made cruel, mocking judgements of the most precious book in the world."

Mr. Matthews, general secretary of the Christian Booksellers Association, which represents 400 Christian bookshops in the U.K., said the major chains had decided not to stock The Pocket Canons. "There's a sharp distinction between what is said in these introductions and liberal Biblical commentary," he said.

"To make an attack on any religious figurehead is wrong. You certainly wouldn't expect an attack on Mohammad or the Buddha, so I don't see why such an attack should be made on God and Jesus."

Norman Nibloe, chairman of the Christian Booksellers Convention and owner of a chain of six Christian bookshops in Kent and Sussex, said: "The way in which the introductions have been done will cause offence to my customers so I won't be stocking them."

"I find it totally incongruous that we've got people commenting on the text of the Bible who have no knowledge of the Christian faith. It would be like asking someone who knows nothing about football to commentate on the World Cup or asking someone who is tone deaf to review the Last Night of the Proms."

The Rt. Rev. Richard Holloway, the Bishop of Edinburgh, was the only Church figure to contribute to The Pocket Canons. He dismissed the claims of blasphemy, saying: "This reaction comes from a particularly narrow religious background and doesn't acknowledge that the Bible is a library of books which can be read in all sorts of ways."

Whatever the immediate result of Mr. Slennett's campaign, he is confident that God will avenge the blasphemy by bringing ruin on Canongate Books. "If there is no God, there is no problem," he said. "But there is a God and He will vindicate His name."

— The Independent

## Environment

### Global warming, Georges and El Nino

Dr. Mark Maslin is a marine geologist at the Environmental Change Research Centre, Department of Geography, University College, London.

EL NINO. Hurricane Georges, floods — all weather events which keep coming back into the news because of the havoc they cause. The pattern of larger, more frequent, and more damaging extreme weather events is exactly what the scientists studying global warming predicted.

We do not know yet whether Hurricane Georges, which hit the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico last week with devastating force, is the costliest ever in purely monetary terms. Will it surpass the previous big one, Hurricane Andrew? In August 1992 Andrew hit the United States and caused damage estimated at \$20 billion. These are, however, not isolated freak storms. The past 10 years have seen a series of hurricanes successively dubbed the worst of the century.

Further evidence of a surge in storm activity is provided by the increasing height of waves. Wave height has been monitored in the North Atlantic since the early fifties, from light ships, Ocean Weather Stations and more recently satellites. Between the fifties and nineties the average wave height has risen from 2.5 metres to 3.5 metres — an increase of 40 per cent.

This intensification of the climate system is not isolated to the North Atlantic. Results from Dr. Julie Cole's group at the University of Colorado show that the El Nino-southern oscillation is speeding up. This is caused by the fluctuating balance between warm and cold surface waters, affecting atmospheric pressure either side of the Pacific. By drilling into the coral reefs off southern New Guinea, they obtained a 200-year-long continuous record of the sea surface temperature, beyond all historic records. By comparing the coral temperature record of the western Pacific with other proxy records they found that over the past 200 years the frequency of El Nino events has increased from once every five years to once every 2.8 years.

These are sobering results considering the huge weather disruption and disasters it causes. Modelling results also suggest that the current "heightened" state of El Nino can permanently shift weather patterns; for example, it seems that the drought region in the U.S.

could be shifting eastward.

Not only have El Nino and wave height been enhanced throughout this century, but they both contain a sharp rise in the seventies. This is when the surface global temperature records show the first steep increase — interpreted as the first sign of global warming. But does this correlation make global warming the culprit? The answer is yes, since global warming is constantly putting more energy into the climate system. This energy must be dissipated both by speeding up the whole system and by increasing the number and intensity of storms.

We know from the records that during periods of rapid climate change weather patterns become erratic and the number of storms increase. An example of this is the Little Ice Age which lasted from the end of the 16th century to the beginning of the 18th. This period is mainly remembered as the time when ice fairs were held on the frozen Thames in London. However, going into and coming out of the Little Ice Age produced apocalyptic tempests: in 1703, as the climate was finally warming, the worst recorded storm in Britain killed more than 8,000 people.

Rapid warming thus increases global storminess, creating perfect conditions for hurricanes. They and their cousins, cyclones and typhoons, form in the tropics when the sea surface temperature is at least 26C down to 60 metres below the surface. All it then takes is a further increase of 1C in sea surface temperature to reduce atmospheric pressure enough to start the convective cell. It is this rapidly rising air which sucks in air at sea level and produces the powerful hurricane vortex.

With increasing global warming, achieving the critical temperatures in the oceans will be easier than ever before, spawning more hurricanes with more energy to unleash upon our coastlines. The message is clear. The Caribbean and U.S. will be hit more often, by bigger, meaner hurricanes. The good news is that by knowing this, it should be possible to improve the evacuation procedures and save lives.

— The Guardian

### The water project that could be poisoning half of Bangladesh

By Peter Popham

ONE OF THE UNITED Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) proudest achievements has been the mass conversion of Bangladesh to tubewells, pump-

*'This UNICEF-induced arsenic crisis may balloon into something on the scale of Africa's AIDS calamity'*

ing up "safe" and "clean" ground water in preference to the dirty, contaminated stuff previously scooped up from the local pond. But that achievement is turning into a nightmare: hundreds of thousands of the wells are delivering water laced with arsenic. Half the nation could be affected. Untold numbers have been stricken with hideous skin cancers. Many will die.

One expert here fears that Bangladesh's UNICEF-induced arsenic crisis may balloon into something on the scale of Africa's AIDS calamity.

When the nation of Bangladesh emerged from the flames of war in 1972, safe drinking water was a priority. Village ponds, which traditionally supplied rural needs, were contaminated with sewage; cholera and fatal diarrhoea were rampant. UNICEF, hand-in-hand with Bangladesh's Department of Public Health and Engineering, launched a campaign to sink a massive number of tubewells to pump water up from the aquifers. Today, three million tubewells provide drinking water for 97 per cent of the population.

But in the past four years it has emerged that in many districts this water contains high levels of arsenic. Across a broad swath of the country, hundreds of thousands of villagers are coming down with appalling skin problems: warts on palms and soles, melanomas on chests and hands, skin cancer, gangrene.

They are suffering from bronchitis, complaining of burning sensations in their chests. All these are symptoms of arsenic poisoning. And though they may not know it, and their barefoot doctors will not detect it, they will also be suffering from the intestinal cancers that are another symptom of arsenic poisoning, and which will eventually kill them. Many may already have died, undiagnosed.

As recently as last year, in a booklet full of sensual photographs of beautiful, serene young peasant women pumping well water and washing vegetables, UNICEF was still blowing its trumpet.

"During the 26 years since independence, the coverage record of the Bangladesh rural drinking water programme has

been outstanding," it said. "In spite of rapid population growth, 2.5 million public and private handpump tubewells have been installed, bringing safe drinking water to 97 per cent of the population."

Now UNICEF is in the midst of a traumatic and belated rethink. Since 1994, when it was finally, grudgingly acknowledged that arsenic in ground water was the cause of Bangladesh's new health crisis, the dimensions of the problem

have been steadily growing clearer. The area worst affected is a broad band across the middle of the country where the earth is alluvium deposited by the Ganges.

Scientists now agree that the arsenic is geological in origin, but they were stunned when it was first detected because arsenic is usually found in hard rocks and volcanic deposits. "When the tubewells were sunk, we tested for the presence of many things in the water," says Rick Johnston, an environmental consultant at UNICEF, "but not arsenic, because we had no reason to suspect we would find it."

Now it appears that arsenic is present in the water supplies of 48,000 of Bangladesh's 68,000 villages in 21 out of the nation's 64 districts. The drinking water of 60 million people — half the population — may be contaminated. Levels of contamination range from 50 parts per billion — five times the maximum level recommended by the World Health Organisation — to 1,000 parts per billion, 100 times the safety limit.

The problem is dauntingly vast. But had UNICEF and its partners in the international aid community not been so dazzled by their own success, they might have nipped it in the bud years ago.

The nature of the problem was first spelt out in 1982 by an Indian specialist in dermatology and tropical medicine, Professor K. Chandra Saha, who examined patients both in Bangladesh and across the Indian border in the state of West Bengal. "I sometimes examined more than 1,000 patients in a day," he says.

"And there were more and more patients with the same symptoms: melanosis and keratosis that could be mistaken for leprosy, but were not leprosy. I couldn't understand it. Then I discovered



A Bangladeshi at a village tubewell in Khazanagar, collecting water laced with arsenic. Below, a victim of second-stage keratosis from the same village (photos from the Independent)

that similar symptoms had been detected as arsenicosis, years before, in an area far from Bengal, in Chandigarh, north-west India. But when I told people this, nobody wanted to believe it. They ignored me."

It was not until 1994 that another Indian, Dr. Dipankar Chakraborti, director of the School of Environmental Studies in Jadavpur University, Calcutta, wrote the report that made the cause of the problem sure beyond possibility of misunderstanding.

Now things have begun to heat up. Last month a team from the British Geological Survey completed a six-month study for the Government's Department for International Development into how the arsenic entered the water supply; last week the World Bank approved a "fast-track project" to assist Bangladesh in coming to terms with the disaster.

Yet changing the way that rural Bangladeshis get their water will be like trying to turn round an oil tanker. After more than two decades spent dotting the country with tubewells, the local industry that produces, installs and maintains the hand pumps, PVC pipes and the other simple equipment required has built up a considerable head of steam.

Already this year 18,000 new tubewells have been installed. And although UNICEF admits that ground water, whether poisoned with arsenic or otherwise, is being depleted so rapidly that within a couple of years half the hand pumps will be defunct in the dry season, they are so wedded to the tubewell "success story" that they cannot contemplate aban-

doing it.

"They are not complacent, they are perhaps stunned," says Han Heijnen, environmental health adviser at the World Health Organisation in Dhaka. "Maybe 60 million people have been exposed to arsenic in the water."

"This causes two sorts of problems. One is the visible skin problems, which may be halted if arsenic ceases to be ingested, even if they cannot be reversed. The other is where the problem has gone too far, resulting in cancer of the intestine, and which may, in four or five or ten years, become an overwhelming health problem here, like AIDS in Africa."

"We have to find a way to change people's access to water quickly. The solution must be easily replaceable, and it must be promoted wholeheartedly," Mr. Heijnen says.

So while UNICEF is exploring (among other things) the idea of sinking much deeper tube wells, at much greater expense and



technical difficulty, Mr. Heijnen, like Dr. Chakraborti in Calcutta, prefers something simpler: teaching villagers to harvest Bangladesh's abundant rainwater — guaranteed arsenic-free — in simple, cheap plastic tanks.

"This is a national emergency, because of the problems we could face down the line," says Mr. Heijnen. "It's comparable to the AIDS problem in Africa. Potentially it could be a volcano exploding."

— The Independent

# Arab gas producers told to change strategy

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf gas producers should radically alter their short-term strategies away from liquefied natural gas (LNG) to other liquefied petroleum products and pipelines, an Italian energy executive said Sunday.

"The obstacles that hinder the launching of new LNG projects need not stop gas exports altogether," Guglielmo Moscato, chairman of Italian energy group ENI SpA, said.

"Alternative gas export strategies may be pursued to increase the share of Gulf countries in global gas trade while waiting for better times for LNG," Moscato said.

Arab Gulf producers have traditionally seen LNG as the main means of exporting their massive gas reserves, but low oil revenues and economic turmoil in their Asian markets was undermining this strategy, Moscato said.

They also faced strong competition from producers inside the Asian market like Australia and Indonesia. In the long-term Gulf LNG producers may find it hard to compete with these sources, Moscato told delegates on the second day of a five-day Middle East Gas Summit in Abu Dhabi.

But he said there were alternatives to LNG.

New pipeline technology, notably in high pressure pipelines and deep sea pipelines and the increased export distances they brought with them, would make pipelines a feasible option for the region's exporters.

Liquefied petroleum products like energy grade methanol would comple-

ment and not compete with LNG exports because it is simpler to regasify than LNG and would therefore be attractive to smaller power plants.

By switching at least some of their production away from the depressed LNG market, Arab Gulf producers would position themselves to take advantage of the huge expected explosion in gas demand, Moscato said.

Global gas demand is expected to grow by the equivalent of 22 million barrels of oil, or 55 per cent, by 2010, he said.

Given the rapid growth of proven gas reserves among Arab Gulf producers, they were well placed to grab a share of the expanding market.

In the Middle East region as a whole, proven gas reserves in the last decade have increased by 58 per cent compared with 25 per cent in the rest of the world, he said.

Although both Russia and Iran have larger proven gas reserves, they both have production difficulties that could give Arab Gulf producers the edge.

Russia faces logistical difficulties with its ground permanently frozen in many places, harsh climatic conditions elsewhere and often huge distances from its gas fields to its markets.

Iran's contractual system "does not encourage foreign investment for the long term. Access to reserves is denied and there is a lack of transport infrastructures," he said.

"Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia therefore may have the opportunity to

considerably increase their role as gas exporters," Moscato said.

Analysts at the Middle East gas summit which opened in Abu Dhabi Sunday said Gulf gas producers have seen their traditional markets eroded by economic turmoil in Asia and hopes for a recovery in the next decade are pinned on India and China.

Asia was until last year seen as the major market for Gulf LNG producers like Qatar and Oman. But most Asian clients have since been hit by economic crises that have stalled or even reversed growth.

Expectations that demand for gas from these markets would absorb increased output from Gulf states have not materialised, the analysts said. "The industry has turned upside down as the effect of Asia's economic and financial crisis have filtered through the energy sector."

"The list of potential new buyers is now effectively reduced to two: India and China," said Chris Holmes, senior downstream and gas consultant with Gaffney, Cline and Associates' office in Singapore.

South Korea, Thailand, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and the Philippines have all experienced slowdowns in demand that range from slight growth in the case of Taiwan to negative demand for South Korea.

Middle East gas producers, which account for a third of the world's proven natural gas reserves, are also facing stiff competition from Asian producers like Indonesia, Malaysia and Australia.

"Demand growth in tradi-

tional LNG has all but stalled and exploitation of new markets has been painfully slow ... The industry faces a somewhat uncertain future," Holmes said.

Amid the gloom, Korea in particular is of concern to Gulf LNG producers.

Oman has agreed to supply Korea Gas Corp. (Kogas) with 4.1 million tonnes a year (mty) for 25 years from 2000, while Qatar's Rasgas has a 4.8 mty sales commitment to Kogas from 1999. But further deals may be a long way off.

Korean LNG imports have risen from 1.7 mty in 1987 to 11.6 mty in 1997 and some were predicting a further growth to 30 mty by 2010.

But total LNG imports for the first five months of 1998 have been at about 80 per cent of their 1997 level. This downturn has worried Gulf producers, despite bullish statements from the Koreans themselves.

"Decline in the demands for natural gas will last only a few years and after 2000 those demands will pick up," said Yonghun Jung, a senior fellow at the government's energy economics institute.

Japan, the world's largest buyer of LNG, has experienced a period of economic stagnation. Despite some small growth in demand, "energy demand in total

will, at best, stagnate and, at worst, contract," Holmes said.

The only two Asian markets remaining with substantial growth potential are China and India.

China has still not explicitly said it wants to import LNG, although analysts at the Abu Dhabi summit said there were three projects that could potentially require large LNG imports.

Some estimates for demand to these LNG projects in the provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, and a third in Jiangshui and Zhenjiang have estimated demand as high as 2.52 billion standard cubic feet per day by 2005.

Only a fraction of this could be met through domestic production with the rest coming either from LNG or pipeline.

India is still seen as the brightest star for LNG exports to Asia. But even with the Indian market, so far largely unscathed by the Asian crisis, analysts are being cautious.

There are about 20 LNG projects planned in India, but the final figure may only be a fraction of that.

"It is not as good as it looks on paper. In the end, about three of those projects are feasible — many do not have electricity markets to go to," said Vishveet Kanwarpal, a consultant from Asia Consulting Group.

## REUTERS • The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates										
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF	
US Dollar	-	1.6488	0.5908	1.3373	118.04	1.5410	1633.10	1.8614	5.3631	
DE Mark	0.6061	-	0.3578	0.8111	71.68	0.9339	989.61	1.1276	3.3624	
GB Sterling	1.6926	2.7917	-	2.2635	200.14	2.6083	2763.17	3.1473	9.5676	
CH Franc	0.7478	123.19	0.4412	-	88.34	1.1516	1219.84	138.94	4.1310	
JP Yen	0.0085	1.3970	0.5000	1.1327	-	1.3049	13.83	157.53	4.6538	
CA Dollar	0.6489	1.2916	0.4225	1.0586	1.30	-	1270.80	1.4551	4.3285	
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0094	0.3614	0.0818	1385.62	0.9431	-	11.38	3.3844	
NL Guilder	0.6372	88.64	0.3173	71.90	63.41	0.8281	877.63	-	2.9726	
FR Franc	0.1807	0.2982	0.1057	24.1700	21.32	0.2785	33.63	33.6300	-	

Middle Eastern Currencies										
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP	
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7505	0.3770	3.6400	0.3009	3.6727	1503.00	3.4025	
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2898	0.6317	5.1340	0.4244	5.1801	2119.89	4.7990	
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1890	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0602	0.98	400.76	0.9072	
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8807	9.9488	-	9.96	0.7962	9.74	3896.95	9.0256	
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0827	1.01	412.91	0.9847	
Kuwait Dinar	3.3234	2.3563	12.4643	1.2628	12.10	-	12.21	4995.01	0.9347	
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0212	1.0206	0.9911	0.0619	-	408.24	0.9264	
Lebanese/1000	0.67	0.4717	2.4953	0.2568	2.4218	0.2002	2.4436	-	2.2638	
Egyptian	0.2939	0.2084	1.1023	0.1108	1.0698	0.0854	1.0794	441.74	-	

Energy		
Oils	Last	revised
Brent	0.00	0.00
W. Texas	14.63	14.60
Bonny	0.00	0.00
Dubai	12.73	12.72
UL Gas	147.00	147.00

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4400	0.15753	0.35691	31.4861
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4493	0.16098	0.36447	32.1633
KW Dinar	3.3234	5.48246	1.96348	4.4484	392.465
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.37637	1.56715	3.55114	313.283
CY Pound	2.0562	3.3933	1.2145	2.7505	242.785

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	295.1	295.5
Silver (oz's)	4.82	4.85
Platinum (oz's)	343	345
AL (3 Months)	1372	1375
CU (3 Months)	1620	1625
Zinc (3 Months)	960	963
Lead (3 Months)	514	515
NI (3 Months)	3885	3890

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)					
Period	1 -	3 -	6 -	1 -	
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Year	
USD	5.4053	5.3438	5.1563	4.8375	
GBP	7.3760	7.2500	7.0877	6.8125	
JPY	0.3616	0.4023	0.4531	0.4883	
DEM	3.5000	3.5625	3.5647	3.5000	
FRF	3.5000	1.2500	1.3281	1.4375	
CHF	1.1289	3.5371	3.5332	3.5039	
ITL	5.0000	4.6970	4.1830	-	

Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	108.67	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1956	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	221	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	121.7	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	25.03	Spot
Tea (stg/kg)	125	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	405	Spot

JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.203	1.209
DE Mark	0.4333	0.4355
CH Franc	0.5354	0.5381
FR Franc	0.1293	0.1299
JP Yen	0.6136	0.6167
NL Guilder	0.3843	0.3862
IT Lira	0.438	0.4402

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

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**NGO Liaison**

Save the Children is recruiting for a NGO Liaison to coordinate the ongoing relationship between SC and one of its key partners. The person in this position will be responsible for a wide range of activities including programme coordination, external representation, grants management, financial management and programme reporting.

Extensive experience, while helpful, is not crucial. The following requirements are: 1) energy, enthusiasm, dependability and initiative, 2) excellent writing skills, 3) fluency in English and Arabic, 4) strong computer skills including Word, Excel and at least one database package.

If interested, please send your CV to:  
Fax # 461 2902 no after than Oct. 22, 1998.

### Manasrah company opens Bossini outlet

IZZAT MANASRAH and Sons Company, agents of Bossini fashion in Jordan, will be opening a second outlet at Sweifayeh next week after having opened a store at Firas Circle in Jabal Hussein last week. The company, with more than 30 years experience in textile and clothing business, plans to open another outlet at the Amman Mall during November.

### Iraq medical, pharmaceuticals exhibition to be held in December

THE IRAQI Doctors Syndicate is holding Iraq Medical '98, the Iraq Medical, Healthcare & pharmaceuticals exhibition from Dec. 12-15, 1998, in conjunction with the 34th Iraq Medical Conference. Doctor Mohammad Abdullah Al Rawi, head of the Iraqi Doctors Syndicate, chief of the exhibition's organising committee said this exhibition is a unique and genuine opportunity for the both Arab & foreign companies, in the field of medical, healthcare & pharmaceuticals to be represented in Iraq. Dr. Rawi said, the need for both medical equipment & expertise has been on the rise for the past few years due to the circumstances that affected Iraq since 1990.

### THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

1 Bible book  
6 Drain screen  
10 Protective ditch  
14 Seed coverings  
15 Customary time  
16 Napoleon's Isle  
17 Take a makeup exam  
18 Chem. chart fig.  
19 Stand on hind legs  
20 Personification of creation  
23 Continental prefix  
24 Rise and fall of ocean  
25 Network of "Nova"  
28 Neighbor of Syr.  
30 Free of charge  
32 78-card deck  
34 Seaport of Okinawa  
36 Australian Island: abbr.  
37 Image: pref.  
38 Flower vendor  
40 Magic-lamp owner  
42 Duck and  
43 Harness piece  
45 Quote an example  
46 Winner's token  
47 French student  
49 Supernatural being  
50 Time meas.  
51 Spanish river  
53 Zero of  
55 Relative by marriage  
59 Lucy's husband  
62 Prevaricator  
63 Jackson or Owens  
64 & others  
65 vinyl omnia  
66 Came up  
67 Painful cry  
68 Visualizes  
69 Sharpened

2 Cookie  
3 Sororities  
4 Benefactor Yale  
5 Atward  
6 Comparative word  
7 Turns around  
8 Rosalind  
9 Russell role  
10 Only just  
11 Spanish cheer  
12 Sheik's garment  
13 Black goo  
21 Plant parts  
22 Anatomical networks  
25 Spendthrift heir  
26 Tuna's cousin  
27 Pelted with rocks  
28 Disgrace  
29 Serving tray  
31 Old man with a scythe  
32 Aussie rock grp.  
35 Solo at the Met  
39 Loiter

41 Pry bar  
44 Long Hawaiian tarawell  
49 Old Testament prophet  
52 Gaucho's cattle-catchers  
54 January in Juarez  
55 Invoice  
56 Goo's up  
57 African fox  
58 Garden invader  
59 Actress Susan of "L.A. Law"  
60 Ike's WWII command  
61 Logger's tool

### Peanuts

THAT WAS A GOOD PRACTICE, HUH, MARCIE?

NO! I THINK I BROKE ALL MY ARMS AND THIRTY FINGERS.

WELL, WE'RE GETTING YOU TOUGHENED UP FOR THE NEW SEASON, HUH?

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN GETTING TOUGHENED UP.

I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND YOU, MARCIE.

### Andy Capp

HE'S NICE LIKE THAT - HE'LL STOP AND LISTEN TO PEOPLE TELLING HIM THINGS HE ALREADY KNOWS

### Mutt'n' Jeff

I GOT AN APPOINTMENT WITH A MOVIE PRODUCER ABOUT MY WAR STORY!

MIND IF I GO ALONG!

SO THEN IN THIS WAR PICTURE WE USE 5000 MEN IN BLUE ON ONE SIDE AND 5000 IN RED ON THE OTHER!

THAT'S GREAT! BUT HOW ARE WE GOING TO PAY 100,000 MEN?

EASY! IN THE LAST BATTLE WE USE REAL BULLETS!

### THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen

"You don't like boring leftovers, so I booby-trapped your mashed potatoes."

### JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

VOYNE

INVEX

ARIVED

PREEMT

Answer here: "O O O O - O O O O"

Yesterday's Jumble: STUNG OFTEN OUTWIT FOURTH  
Answer: No sausage? At a German picnic there's — NOTHING WURST

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Lower of Jap

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## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Lower value of yen brings down price of Japanese cars in the local market

**\*\* THE REASON** that prices of Japanese cars are low is the decline in the yen value against the dollar, said Farid Duwani, deputy general manager of the Mitsubishi car dealership in Amman. He also attributed the drop in prices to the inability of the local market to cope with the sharp competition and the import of small cars by dealers operating on their own.

Duwani explained that agents of international car companies shoulder maintenance expenditures as they provide after-sale services while other showroom dealers sell cars without guarantees. "By not abiding to Jordanian specifications, owners of car showrooms put an additional burden on the agents," he said. He demanded that the government put an end to unjustified import and asked the concerned authorities to reconsider the high customs fees and regulations imposed on cars.

The Mitsubishi agent said demand did not match the rise in supply noting that some companies had high hopes based on the volume of sales last year. But, he added, their expectations did not come true as a result of the recession. Duwani concluded that despite the noticeable increase in the facilities provided by the companies to their clients, such steps did nothing to change the facts.

Arafat Al Saheb, manager of the Nissan Agency, said the general fall in the prices of cars in the local market was due to stiff competi-

tion but for the Japanese cars, the decline in the value of the yen against the dollar was yet another factor. He estimated the drop in prices by between 10 and 15 per cent compared to prices of last year.

Saheb agreed with Duwani that owners of car showrooms were also responsible for the decline in the car prices and low sales. He indicated that the more supply there is in the market, the lower the prices are. The Nissan agent demanded that car dealers should abide by the local specifications noting that the agents face a real problem by not being able to provide spare parts for the cars sold at showrooms. "Such cars have different specifications than the ones sold by the agents," he said urging the government to step in in order to organise this situation.

Consumers interviewed about the car market emphasised that car prices are still high. They have big hopes that prices will decline further especially after Jordan joins the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and after a reconsideration of customs fees and other charges. The consumers exclaimed how can one buy a used car which before 1989 was worth JD1,000 and now, after being 10-year old, costs many times as much (Al Rai'i)

### Lawzi values ISO 9002 awarded to directorate of laboratories, research

AMMAN (J.T.) — Public Works and Transport Minister Nasser Lawzi Monday received the ISO 9002 certificate, which was awarded to the Laboratories and Research Directorate of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing by the German T.U.V. Bayern and Philadelphia Investment Group.

In a statement to the Arabic daily Al Rai, Lawzi said this achievement would not have been made possible had it not been for the ministry's keen interest to keep abreast with the latest developments in such areas as quality assurance regulations.

Lawzi said the award of the ISO 9002 certificate to the laboratory and research department will enable it to provide quality services in such areas as training to foreign and local companies.

A total of 15 companies have so far been awarded quality assurance certificates, and the number is expected to reach 25 by the end of this year, according to deputy director of the T.U.V. Bayern Company.

## Toilet paper under threat in Japanese cost-cutting drive

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's firms are on a cost-cutting drive that has rung the death knell on years of extravagant corporate dining and nightclub outings and even threatens the liberal use of toilet paper.

For years, Japanese companies have tried to cut back on their staff's nocturnal sorties, leaving racy city districts almost deserted. Faced with the deepest economic crisis since World War II, however, the cost-cutting drive is now going to extremes.

Tight control has been imposed by some corporate authorities on the use of paper, pencils, erasers and even toilet paper. Jiro Yamamoto, a trader at a brokerage here, told the weekly Asahi magazine that managers had even told staff that from now on they should try to call clients during the lunch hour.

"The reasoning is that your customer will most likely be out to lunch, so the customer will have to call you back" and pay for the telephone conversation, he said. "I find the company's pettiness utterly dis-

dainful." An employee of a large electronics product manufacturer told the magazine that in the toilets "we are not supposed to use more than two perforated segments each time."

Ichiro Watanabe, who works in the education sector, says detergent stocked in company kitchens is diluted and "erasers are cut into halves before they are handed out."

Budgetary restrictions are filtering into every sector of Japanese industry. In the laboratory at an international pharmaceutical company, based in the science village of Tsukuba, meetings are organised to ask employees to reflect on the best way to cut expenses.

"Salaries are not being further reduced and the management hasn't touched the bonuses for the moment. But everyone is called on to reflect. They ask us to turn off the lights when leaving laboratories. Using elevators is restricted," said a foreign researcher at the company which uses Japanese management methods.

Realising the difficulties facing companies and keen to preserve jobs above all else, the powerful Japanese Trade Union Confederation (Rengo) announced at the end of September it would refrain from demanding wholesale salary increases in traditional Spring negotiations with management.

"Times have changed. Rengo should no longer set a unified wage hike figure that its members automatically accept," said an official at Rengo, which has seven million members nationwide.

The first to suffer are staff at small- and medium-sized companies which have been worst hit by the recession. The same strictures are hitting the public sector. Tokyo announced Friday that salary rises for central government employees will be restricted to 0.76 per cent for the fiscal year starting next March.

Unlike Western companies which don't hesitate to lay off staff in crises, Japan's traditional lifetime employment system means redundancies are still the exception. Salary cuts are

also rare in big industries. But some companies hide wage reductions by transferring employees to affiliates or reviewing staff employment conditions and leaving them little choice but to accept.

The daily Asahi newspaper says well-known groups such as Itochu, Tomen and Nippon Express have suspended twice-yearly bonuses to employees, reducing their income by 10 per cent. "Conditions in Japan's labour market are deteriorating rapidly because of a deep and protracted economic contraction and because longer-term structural shortcomings are fraying the fabric of the Brothers in a report this month.

"Japan's famously flexible labour market has responded to the unfavourable environment in the typical way — hours worked have fallen, bonuses have been reduced and total incomes have contracted but this has not sufficed to prevent a surge in the unemployment rate and in the number of unemployed," it concluded.

as at 12/10/98	12/10/98	12/10/98	12/10/98
DL	ITL	NLG	FRF
410	1633.10	1.6614	5.5001
339	989.61	1.1276	3.5501
383	2763.17	3.1472	9.5001
515	1216.34	1.2874	4.1001
949	13.83	157.53	4.8001
431	1270.80	1.4851	4.3001
381	877.53	1.138	3.3001
785	33.63	33.6300	2.9701

JWD	AED	LBP	EGP
1009	3.6727	1503.00	4.0001
1244	5.1801	2119.88	4.7001
3802	3.98	400.75	4.0001
7982	9.74	3986.95	5.0001
3827	1.01	412.91	0.5001
0819	12.21	4995.01	0.5001
2002	2.4435	408.24	0.0501
3884	1.0794	441.74	2.2001

JWD	GBP	CHF	JPY
4490	0.15753	0.36991	31.9601
4492	0.15088	0.36447	31.9201
48245	1.96348	4.4484	392.0001
37637	1.56715	3.55114	311.2001
3955	1.2145	2.7596	242.7001

Month	Months	Months	Months
1	3	6	12
3.4053	5.3458	5.1501	4.0001
7.3750	7.2600	7.0977	6.0001
3.5516	0.4623	0.4631	0.0001
3.6000	3.5625	3.5647	3.0001
3.5900	1.2500	1.2501	1.0001
1.1255	0.5371	0.5372	1.0001
5.0000	4.6870	4.1830	1.0001

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.704	0.706
GB Sterling	1.201	1.203
DE Mark	0.433	0.435
CH Franc	0.535	0.537
FR Franc	0.125	0.127
JP Yen	0.013	0.014
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## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) You should be having a great time today with the moon in Leo. Pluto in Sagittarius gives you a grand time in fire signs. You'll be so enthusiastic and exuberant that you'll bounce right over any minor difficulties. You look marvellous, and you've got the attention of a very attractive person. Make the most of it.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Every time you turn around, you're running into opposition. Might as well get used to it. Just hold your ground on the most important stuff, and let them have a few minor points. It'll distract them and you could get away with the thing you want the most. It's certainly worth a try.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) You're more confident today, and that's drawing attention from a very attractive person. You'd like this person to think you're in control of everything, but don't pretend you know more than you do, or have more authority. He or she actually likes you just the way you are. Isn't that neat?

**CANCER:** (June 22 to July 21) The sun is in Libra and the moon is in Leo. Money is coming in today with a little help from you. Push the right buttons and pull the right strings. Also, take hold of an opportunity that's not going to last long. A friend will point it out to you.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) You're awesome today, passing even your own expectations, and the adoration you're getting from your fans is making you even more confident. You could do the whole thing alone, of course, but it's so much more fun to have others applauding your magnificent accomplishments.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) An arrogant know-it-all is difficult to live with, but put up with it anyway. One of the keys to your success is your adaptability, and that's going to come in handy right now. Another key is your ability to see what's coming and stay out of the way, if necessary. That'll be useful, too.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Your friends will teach you what you need to know, or give you a boost when

you get stopped. They might believe in you even more than you believe in yourself. That's OK, at least for a little while. Allow yourself to be convinced, of your own magnificence. Then, get to work to prove it.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Put up with an older person's whims today. There's no point in arguing. He or she has the advantage, and won't listen anyway. Your drive is to succeed, and new opportunities are becoming available. In order to get the big break, you may have to make friends with the enemy, at least temporarily.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) You and your friends are in festive moods, but don't forget the job at hand. Unfortunately, it's not as interesting as the conversation around the water cooler. Sure, you could make new friends and influence people's thinking, but you'll lose your job if you don't do the tedious, boring stuff, too. So pay attention.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) You may know a lot of the gossip already, but do you know where the real money's coming from, and going to? Well, if you keep your ear to the keyhole, you could find out today. The more you know, the more valuable you become, right? Today, learn enough to crank yourself up to the next pay bracket.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Join forces with a partner instead of butting heads and you'll figure out how to achieve a goal you share. If you don't have a shared goal yet, make that a priority. You two have been known to argue for years over trivialities, but that's not a good idea. You could miss the opportunity altogether.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) You'd like to make a date, but there may not be time. It looks like your work goes late, due to complications beyond your control. It might be a foul-up on somebody else's part, but you're the one who's delegated to fix it. Maybe you can get another person to help. That would certainly be wise.

Birthstone of September: Opal — Tourmaline

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## No change in Bangkok Asian Games venues — organisers

TOKYO (AFP) — Organisers of the Bangkok Asian Games in December assured Japan on Monday there would be no change in the main games venues despite some worries about delays in construction amid the economic crisis.

Charouk Arirachakaran, secretary general of the Bangkok Asian Games organising committee, said here all facilities at the Bangkok B-Land Sports Complex would be completed on time.

It was reported last month construction of the B-Land complex had been delayed and some of the seven sports to be staged there might be relocated to the northern city of Chiang Mai.

"There will be no move of venues. Those sports events will all be held at B-Land as initially scheduled," said Charouk, here to promote the Games.

"I promise the (B-Land) center will definitely be ready in time. All venues

are due to be completed by October 15," he added.

Charouk said the committee made a decision a few days ago to keep all the seven sports — including gymnastics, tennis and volleyball — at B-Land, also known as the Muang Thong Thani Sports Complex, as scheduled.

The four other sports are boxing, weightlifting, snooker and rugby.

The secretary general added road links, including highways, between games

venues and the centre of Bangkok would be completed by the end of November ahead of the December 6-20 games.

He said 36 out of the 43 member countries of the Olympic Council of Asia had so far formally submitted their entries.

But the committee hoped to see all sign up by the deadline for the entries of individual names on November 6, Charouk said.

## Olympic organisers defend torch relay payment to Aboriginals

SYDNEY (AFP) — Olympic organisers Monday rejected criticism of a \$560,000 Australian (\$37,000) fee being paid to Aboriginal groups so the Olympic torch relay could start at Ayers Rock.

Ayers Rock, now commonly referred to by its Aboriginal name 'Uluru' in Australia, is considered a sacred site by indigenous groups.

Olympic organisers announced Sunday that the Olympic torch relay would begin at Uluru, in central Australia before winding its way east through the outback toward Sydney for the start of the 2000 Olympic Games.

New South Wales state Olympics Minister Michael Knight said the fee was appropriate and would be used to protect the sacred site when the international media assembled for the beginning of the relay June 8, 2000.

"This is not just, 'Here's a bunch of money,'" a spokesman for Knight said.

"This is a negotiated fee for provision of access to the Rock, and more than that, for control and management because when the international media assemble it will be the most intensive gathering of people in its history.

"It's a sacred site and SOCOG (Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games) is mindful of that."

The spokesman said the money would be distributed between a number of groups at Uluru and elders would guide media around the site.

All visitors to Uluru pay a fee.



Denver Broncos running back Terrell Davis (30) dives through the Seattle Seahawks line, including Dean Wells (95) and Darryl Williams (33) in Seattle. Davis ran for 208 yards in the Broncos' 21-16 victory (AP Photo)

## NFL champion Broncos beat Seattle to remain unbeaten

SEATTLE (AFP) — In an American football game where passers John Elway and Warren Moon were expected to star, Denver rusher Terrell Davis dominated to keep the reigning champions unbeaten.

Davis ran for 208 yards and a touchdown as the Broncos beat Seattle 21-16, improving to a National Football League best 6-0 with their 10th victory over the Seahawks in their past 12 meetings.

The Broncos won a franchise-record 11th straight game, including their Super Bowl title run last season, and matched last year's 6-0 start against a club pushing for its own playoff bid.

"Coming in here, we knew it wasn't going to be a typical regular season game," Davis said. "It's somewhat had playoff implications."

"When I came into this game, I knew it was going to be tough yards. I had my mind set to come in here and try and run hard. Eventually, we felt we could have some break-outs."

Denver also matched the 1986 Chicago Bears for the second-best start by a defending Super Bowl champion. The Broncos need to win four more to match the record of the 1990 San Francisco 49ers.

Davis has an NFL-high 865 yards and leads the league in scoring with 54 points. Davis also set club records with five straight 100-yard games and his 44th touchdown.

Elway did not mind letting Davis handle the bulk of the load, knowing that defense and rushing to balance his aerial attack are vital to Denver hopes of repeating as Super Bowl champions.

"I think we're good enough in all aspects," Elway said. "If we're struggling offensively a little bit, the defense seems to pick it up and vice versa. We're very happy to be 6-0, but we've got a long way to go."

Seattle Moon, playing with cracked ribs, was

forced to leave the game after three quarters. He completed 15-of-32 passes for 154 yards before giving way to John Friesz.

"I just couldn't move anymore," Moon said. "I couldn't function. I probably stayed in a series too long. I got hit right on my rib right before the half."

Steve Young matched an NFL record with his fifth consecutive 300-yard passing game on his 37th birthday, throwing for 309 yards and three touchdowns to spark San Francisco past New Orleans 31-0.

The victory lifted the 49ers (4-1) into the NFC West division lead and dropped the Saints one game off the pace.

Young completed 21-of-40 passes and matched the NFL mark set by retired former teammate Joe Montana in 1982. He also became the 20th quarterback in league history to throw for 30,000 career yards.

"Records are great, but I think it's about performing and keeping steady throughout the year," said Young. "We have a standard and we want to keep it."

Drew Bledsoe fired three touchdown passes and host New England ripped Kansas City 40-10 to claim the AFC East division lead. The Patriots rose to 4-1 with their fourth victory in a row.

"Just about everything that could go right for us did," said Bledsoe. "It's so great to win like that against a good team. When we can run the ball like that effectively we become very difficult to handle."

It was Kansas City's worst loss since losing 44-10 to Buffalo in 1994.

In a battle of winless clubs, Philadelphia's Rodney Peete helped the Eagles avoid ultimate humiliation by running for a touchdown and throwing for another in a 17-12 victory over Washington.

Peete completed 15-of-28 passes for 121 yards with one interception as Philadelphia (1-5) defeated the Redskins for the 10th

time in the last 12 meetings.

The Redskins are off to their worst start since 1961, when Washington began 0-9.

"When you're struggling it gets harder and harder to win," Washington coach Norv Turner said. "It's amazing that one or two plays can give you back that confidence."

NFC East leader Dallas cornerback Deion Sanders thwarted a potential game-tying drive late in the fourth quarter with an interception as the Cowboys erased an 11-point deficit and beat winless Carolina 27-20.

Cincinnati's Neil O'Donnell fooled his former team with a fake spike and lofted a 25-yard touchdown pass to Carl Pickens with 20 seconds to play to give the Bengals a 25-20 victory over Pittsburgh.

Three years removed from a Super Bowl appearance with the Steelers, O'Donnell was magnificent in his first game against his former team, completing 20-of-26 passes for 298 yards and three touchdowns.

Arizona forced eight turnovers to beat Chicago 20-7 while the St. Louis Rams snapped an eight-game home losing skid with a 30-10 victory over the New York Jets and Atlanta beat the New York Giants 34-20.

Wade Wilson, 39, threw a 68-yard touchdown pass to James Jett with 88 seconds to play to lift Oakland past San Diego 7-6. In other games, Tennessee edged Baltimore 12-8 and Buffalo beat Indianapolis 31-24.

## Henman powers to greatest title win

BASLE (AFP) — Englishman Tim Henman celebrated the greatest win of his blossoming tennis career here on Sunday when he beat former World No. 1 Andre Agassi 6-4, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 to take the Swiss Open title.

The 24-year-old eighth seed, who picked up his fourth career title, also avenged his defeat to the fourth-seeded Agassi on their only previous meeting in the Los Angeles final earlier this year.

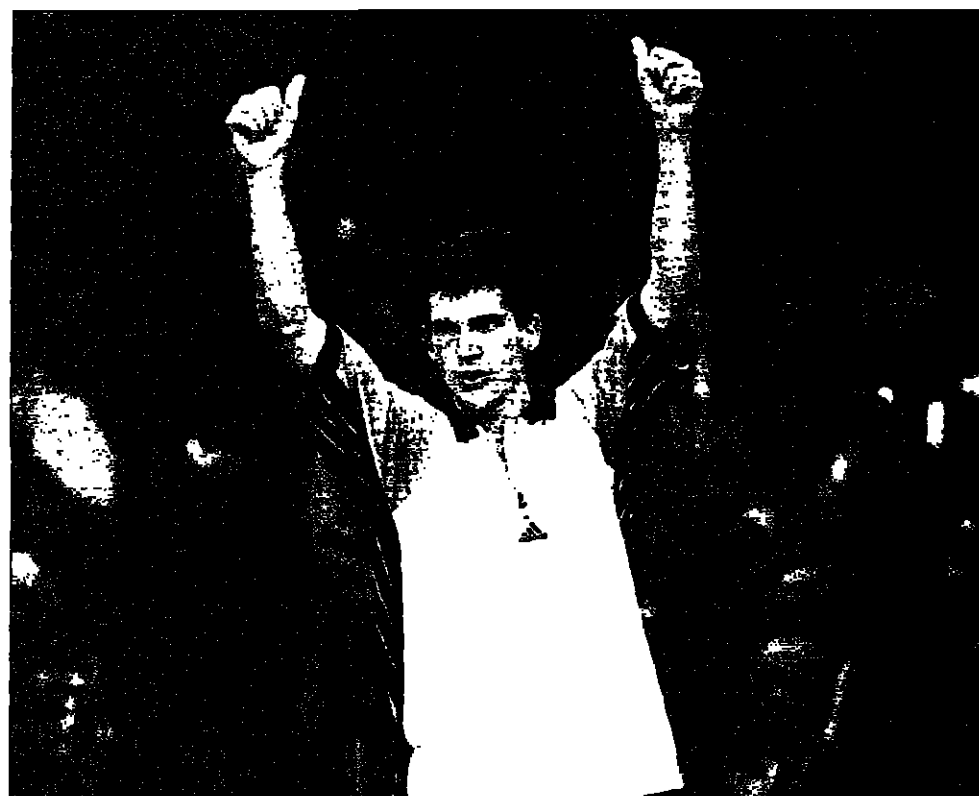
"This is definitely up there with reaching the Wimbledon semi-finals this season, perhaps even higher than that," Henman said.

"To come away from this tournament with the title considering the opposition is a great achievement," he added.

The British No. 1, who succeeded compatriot Greg Rusedski as champion, was up against it at 3-3 in the first set when Agassi had three break points but Henman bounced back to win five points in succession to win the game and then broke the American at 5-4 to take the first set in 36 minutes.

The 24-year-old Englishman, who made the Wimbledon semi-finals in June, then seized control of the second set by breaking the shaven-headed Agassi twice, before running out a 6-3 winner.

However, the American, who has soared up to number eight in the world from 122 at the beginning of the year, rattled Henman's confidence in the third set going from 2-2 to 6-3 to reduce the deficit.



Tim Henman of Great Britain celebrates winning the Swiss Indoors Tennis tournament in Basle. Henman beat Andre Agassi of the United States during their final match 6-4, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 (Reuters photo)



Andre Agassi

Henman, who retained his Presidents Cup title in September, enjoyed a see-saw of a fourth set before managing to break Agassi crucially at 5-4 to take the match.

"My game has really improved over the past three years, and still needs to if I am to threaten the top three, but I

have gained in self belief and confidence in the past three weeks and I think that is reflected out there on the court," he said.

The Englishman, who also reached the fourth round of the U.S. Open where he lost to finalist Mark Philippoussis, moves on to Vienna,

where he reached the semi-finals last year.

But he was not taking his first-round opponent, veteran Swede Magnus Gustafsson for granted.

"I will have to be on my guard as he is a wily player although I have a good record against him," he said.

## Arsenal and Barcelona want Del Piero

MILAN (AFP) — English champions Arsenal and Barcelona are preparing offers for Juventus ace Alessandro Del Piero worth up to \$35 million, the Italian press reported on Monday.

Del Piero, whose agents are trying to negotiate a new long-term contract with the Turin club, is back in the limelight after scoring both Italy's goals against Switzerland at Udine over the weekend.

Barcelona are willing to stump nearly 60 billion lira for the 23-year-old striker, who would be offered personal terms of \$4.25

million a year, net of income tax, for eight years.

The Catalan club are in the market for a soccer superstar after losing Ronaldo to Juventus' Serie A rivals, Inter Milan.

Arsenal are also considering a substantial offer to bring Del Piero to Highbury, the reports said, without giving details.

Del Piero was meanwhile preparing to make a pop video with his favourite rock star, Sting, on Monday.

The two men will become knights in medieval costume at a countryside location near Udine in

northeastern Italy, with the music destined to be the soundtrack for a new Sharon Stone movie.

Sting will not be the only one to find Del Piero buoyed up by his weekend double against the Swiss.

Team coach Marcello Lippi reckons that the end of Del Piero's goal drought, which coincided with the allegations from AS Roma coach Zdenek Zeman of drug use, can only be good news for Juventus.

"I knew it was just a question of time," Lippi said. "Now I think he will be even more enthusiastic about things. He was already playing better after his first goal and

went looking for the second.

"And there's no way you can score a goal like he did then from a free-kick if you don't feel good about yourself. He's been physically ready for some time, and now I think he is psychologically as well."

Lippi, whose side have yet to win a European Champions League match this season, predicted: "I think he will be reaping the benefits of those two goals at Udine for the rest of the season."

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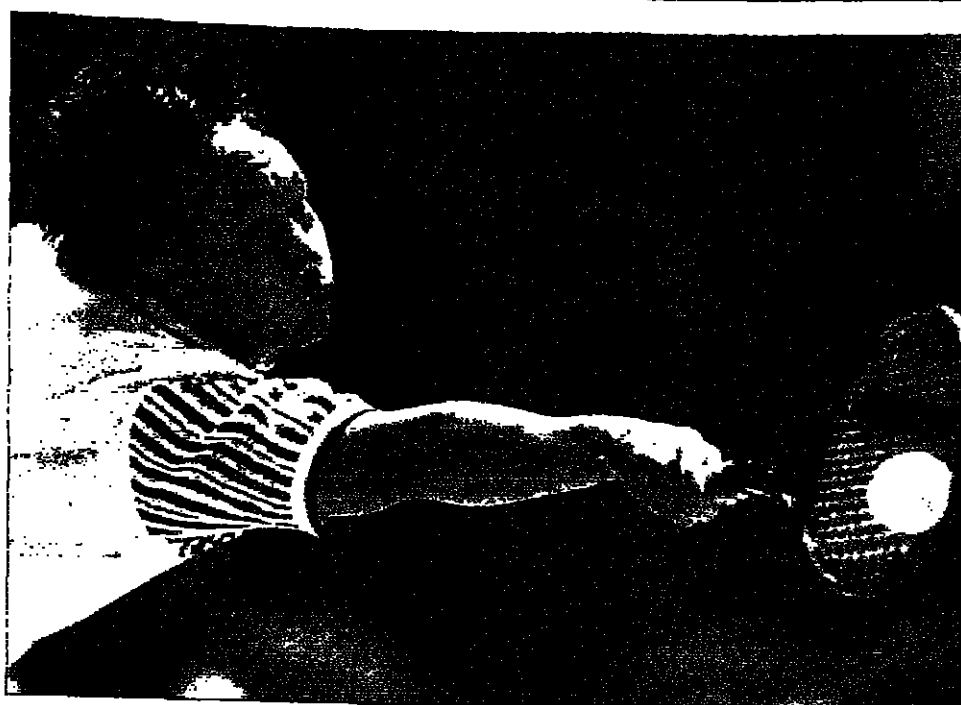
## Chang downs Ivanisevic to win Shanghai Open

SHANGHAI (AFP) — Michael Chang came from a set down to thrash top seed Goran Ivanisevic and win the Shanghai Open 4-6, 6-1, 6-2 in front of a highly partisan crowd Monday.

The Chinese-American, who picked up a \$48,000 winner's cheque, used his wide range of precision groundstrokes to dominate the final two sets, tiring his taller and heavier opponent by sending him scurrying around the court.

A hero in China, Chang enjoyed vocal support throughout the tournament. With the victory, the second seed made good on a public vow to win all three ATP tour events on Chinese soil, following wins in recent years in Beijing and Hong Kong.

Rain in the morning fore-



Michael Chang

shadowed a second postponement of the final, originally scheduled for Sunday, but play finally went ahead under cloudy skies.

## Yankees grab series edge

CLEVELAND (AFP) — David Wells struck out 11 Cleveland batters and Chili Davis hit a home run and a two-run single here Sunday to lead New York past Cleveland 5-3 in the American League championship.



The New York Yankees Chili Davis hits a two-run single in the first inning of Game 5 of the American League Championship Series at Jacobs Field in Cleveland, Ohio. Davis also hit a solo home run in the fourth inning as he led the Yankees to a 5-3 defeat of the Cleveland Indians and a 3-2 lead in the series (AP Photo)

Chad Ogea after only 1 1/3 innings, tagging the struggling veteran for three runs in the first inning on a two-run single by Chili Davis and a run-scoring ground out by Tim Lincecum.

The Indians answered in the bottom of the first inning on Kenny Lofton's solo homer off David Wells and a run-scoring sacrifice fly by Manny Ramirez, pulling within 3-2.

But the Yankees stretched the margin to 5-2 on Paul O'Neill's run-scoring single in the second and a Chili Davis solo homer to right field with two out in the fourth, putting them in the lead.

Jim Thome's third homer of the series, a solo blast to right field off Wells in the sixth, cut the deficit to 5-3 but the Tribe got no closer.

The Indians were without two key starters. David Justice was sidelined by a bruised right forearm and catcher Sandy Alomar was out with back spasms.

## Italian doping chief quits

ROME (AFP) — Italy's top drugs buster, Ugo Longo, resigned here on Monday in the wake of a continuing doping scandal in Italian soccer.

Longo was head of the anti-doping prosecution service within the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI), the ruling body for national sport and whose own president, Mario Pescante, quit exactly two weeks ago.

Longo's move, which he explained "for work reasons", had been on the cards.

His service had failed to show any tangible results in two years' work, while Longo had concluded a doping enquiry in August saying that the phenomenon simply did not exist in Italian soccer.

The past six weeks, however, have seen a string of damaging revelations about Italy's dope test laboratory,

which has been closed down and all its officials sacked, and claims of widespread drug test failures and cover-ups.

Longo's service is one of three parts to the bureaucracy of doping officialdom in Italy. It is responsible for investigating allegations of doping by an athlete and making a recommendation to a separate commission of enquiry.

The commission considers them before making its own recommendations to the athlete's sporting federation, such as cycling or football, who then take any sanctions they consider necessary.

However, Longo's recommendations have been systematically ignored by both the doping commission and the major sports federations, rendering his team's efforts largely pointless.

He tendered his resignation to a CONI meeting here on Monday which was also due to receive that of Pescante.

The moves came as one of several other sporting, governmental and judicial enquiries into doping in Italian sport came to an end.

Carlo Federico Grosso, who headed a three-man government enquiry ordered by Italy's Deputy Prime Minister Walter Veltroni, handed over his report on Monday. Veltroni will reveal its conclusions on Wednesday.

The day's doping action was meanwhile set to continue with one or more of the sacked officials from the laboratory at Acqua Acetosa coming before a Rome magistrate in a civil action.

They are being investigated over the disappearance of dope test results from the lab.

## Edwards named European Athlete of the Year

LONDON (AFP) — Triple jumper Jonathan Edwards was named Athlete of the Year on Monday by the European Athletic Association.

Edwards who captured a gold medal at this summer's European Championships in Budapest received 611 votes, ahead of second placed Colin Jackson (536) and third-placed Steve Backley (445).

The panel of judges made up of journalists, European federations and events organisers also put Iwan Thomas - who was seventh with 244 votes - into the top 10.

French sprinter Christine Arron, the 100metres European record holder and gold medalist at Budapest, received 903 votes to win the female Athlete of the Year honour.

Ireland's Sonia O'Sullivan (860) was second and Germany's Heike Drechsler (686) third, with heptathlete Denise Lewis (72) the only Briton to finish in the top 10.



World No. 1 Pete Sampras of the United States bounces a tennis ball on his knee during an exhibition match. Sampras is playing the Austrian CA-Trophy ATP Tournament from October 12 to October 18 in Vienna (Reuters photo)

## Braves put the brakes on Padres

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — The Atlanta Braves' bats heated up just in time to cool down San Diego's surge toward the World Series.

Atlanta, facing the first four-game sweep in club history, exploded with six runs in the seventh inning — including a grand slam from Andres Galaraga.

They beat the Padres 8-3 and narrowed the gap in the National League Championship Series to 3-1.

They still face a monumental task. No team has ever come back from a 3-0 deficit in a best-of-seven post-season series, and the Padres have one more chance to seal it at home on Monday.

"It's either win tonight or go home," said Braves manager Bobby Cox. "So it's a damned big right now. We have a one-game series starting tomorrow."

The Braves had scored only three runs in the first three games of the series. On Sunday they mustered 12 hits against five Padres pitchers.

The Padres took a 3-2 lead in the sixth thanks to a home run by Jim Leyritz, Atlanta's post-season nemesis.

But Javier Lopez tied it with a leadoff home run in the seventh off Padres starter Joey Hamilton. Hamilton then gave up an infield single to Andruw Jones and was relieved by Randy Myers.

Myers retired pinch-hitter Gerald Williams but a wild pitch advanced Jones. Shortstop Ozzie Guillen, making his first post-season start, singled to left to score Jones. Then Keith Lockhart reached on a grounder to second and Chipper Jones

walked to load the bases. San Diego sent Dan Miceli to the mound, only to have Galaraga sock a 1-0 pitch 459 feet over the left-center-field wall to give Atlanta an 8-3 lead.

Galaraga was 1-for-12 without batting home a run in the series before the grand slam, which was his first home run since September.

"When I hit, I said 'Thank you, God, for this one,'" Galaraga said. "I really needed it, especially the team, to stay alive."

Cox said he knew Galaraga's bat would come alive sometime.

"I thought the odds were with us tonight," Cox said. "He's like everybody else. He can get cold for four or five days and then he can get hot and carry you."

"It had to happen sometime, and, boy, it was a big one tonight."

Dennis Martinez retired the

only batter he faced in the sixth for the win. Hamilton took the loss.

Leyritz posted his fourth homer of this postseason as well as a run-scoring single. It was his seventh career postseason homer, a string that included a blast for the New York Yankees against Atlanta that turned the tide of the 1996 World Series.

San Diego manager Bruce Bochy said Lopez' homer to get back on terms after Leyritz' blast was crucial.

"It was key," Bochy said. "Because we had a big home run there to give us the lead. And I don't know how Lopez hit that ball out. It looked like it was up out of the zone, but he had enough to get it out."

"When you score, you like to shut them down. But we didn't do it tonight."

The Braves became the fourth team in 22 tries to win the fourth game of a best-of-seven series after losing the first three. But no team that

has gone in an 0-3 hole has ever held on to force a sixth game.

Atlanta, who won a club record 106 games this season, will try when they send John Smoltz, who boasts an 11-3 postseason record, to the mound on Monday against San Diego starter Andy Ashby.

If they do pull off a victory, the series moves back to Atlanta for games six and seven.

## Owen backs Hoddle after Bulgarian fisaco

LONDON (AFP) — England striker Michael Owen came to the defence of coach Glen Hoddle on Monday.

Hoddle was booed by fans on Saturday after his sides woeful performance against Bulgaria at Wembley but Owen insists the former Spurs star should remain in charge.

"He is the right man for the job," said Owen.

"The players were partly to blame for the performance.

The manager put a team out on the pitch and beforehand I don't think people were complaining about the team selection. I can't see why all the blame is heaped on the manager. "What we need now is a result in Luxembourg. It would be nice to win in style with a few goals but the main priority is three points."

Owen added that he would be disappointed if he was axed for Wednesday's vital European Championship

qualifying clash in Luxembourg.

Against the Bulgarians, the Liverpool star squandered two of England's few opportunities in sharp contrast to his never-to-be-forgotten goal against Argentina in the World Cup.

That endeared him to the nation but on Saturday a chorus of boos was ringing in his ears when England trudged disconsolately off the pitch.

However, Owen claimed

that his confidence has not been affected, that his performances have not been as below par as portrayed and this his partnership with skipper Alan Shearer is beginning to develop on the right lines.

Boy wonder Owen believes that problems in midfield were the main reason for Saturday's lack of goalmouth action with a weak header from Andy Hinchcliffe representing England's only effort on target.

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7	4461	29	362
8	5854	30	7948
9	7474	31	3713
10	136	32	2013
11	7773	33	6544
12	10240	34	3117
13	5413	35	6593
14	10235	36	10640
15	2448	37	10337
16	2424	38	107
17	578	39	178
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## Taleban make 'good ground' on 3 fronts in autumn offensive

HUSSEIN KOT (AFP) — The Taleban militia claimed to have made "some ground" Monday amid heavy fighting on three fronts as its autumn offensive entered a third day.

Frontline Taleban sources told AFP the third front around Tagab, 70 kilometres northeast of Kabul, was opened overnight and a fourth front is expected to be opened within the next two days.

"At the moment heavy fighting is going on in Tagab district and we have made some advance," a Taleban frontline commander said.

However, in New Delhi, the envoy of deposed Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani said the offensive had been repelled on four fronts, with hundreds of Taleban either killed or taken prisoner.

"Not only did they achieve nothing, but they also lost some territory," Ambassador Masood Khalili said.

He added losses among the forces loyal to Rabbani were "minimal" while the Taleban ranks had been bolstered by a sizeable contingent of Pakistani fighters. Pakistan denies any military involvement.

Russia Monday in a joint declaration issued with Uzbekistan told rival forces to cease fighting and open a constructive dialogue, Interfax news agency said.

The appeal was signed by

### Ibrahimi agrees to visit Taleban base

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — U.N. Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi Monday agreed to visit the southern Afghan city of Kandahar for talks with Taleban chief Mulla Mohammad Omar to ease tension between Iran and Afghanistan, Taleban officials said.

Ibrahimi has assured a visiting Taleban official, Wakil Ahmad, that after consulting U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, he would "most probably" visit Kandahar on Wednesday, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported.

Ahmad who met with the U.N. envoy here for the third time in the past 24 hours to persuade Ibrahimi to visit Afghanistan, expressed his "satisfaction" at the outcome of his meeting.

The U.N. envoy had earlier refused to visit the Taleban headquarters for security reasons.

"By the grace of God the talks were held in a cordial atmosphere," Ahmad told the private news service AIP.

He said during his day long stay in Kandahar, Ibrahimi will hold talks with Taleban's supreme leader Mulla Omar.

The visit is aimed at ending Iran-Afghan tension triggered by the killing of eight Iranian diplomats and a journalist during the militia's takeover of Mazar-e-Sharif, the Tehran-backed opposition's key stronghold in northern Afghanistan in August.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin and his Uzbek counterpart Islam Karimov on the closing day of Yeltsin's two-day official visit to Uzbekistan.

Dialogue between the two sides requires an immediate halt to the violence and an end to deliveries of weapons and supplies into the war zone by Afghanistan's neighbours, the text said.

According to the declaration, Yeltsin and Karimov considered that the Taleban's open defiance of U.N. resolutions was the main cause of the continued fighting.

The Taleban's pre-winter operation had been timed to coincide with negotiations between a Taleban delegation and U.N. envoy Lakhdar Ibrahimi in Islamabad, Khalili

said. "The Taleban are hoping to gain some political capital out of this attack," he said.

Ibrahimi Monday agreed to visit the southern Afghan city of Kandahar for talks with Taleban chief Mulla Mohammad Omar to ease tension between Iran and Afghanistan.

The U.N. envoy had earlier refused to visit the Taleban headquarters for security reasons.

Heavy fighting had already been reported north of Kabul Sunday when independent sources confirmed Taleban warplanes had launched a wave of raids.

The Taleban sources said artillery barrages were continuing along two other fronts —

to the north of the Salang tunnel linking Kabul with northern Afghanistan and in the Ghorband valley.

The Taleban's three new frontlines are to the northwest, north and south of the positions of opposition commander Ahmad Shah Masood in Parwan province.

The Taleban commander said a fourth strike was expected to be launched from Hussein Kot, 30 kilometres north of Kabul, within the next two days. This would aim to open another front between Tagab and Ghorband.

"Morale is high and we are prepared and if fighting starts from this end it will only take three or four days for us to take care of Masood," the commander said.



VICTIMS OF ATROCITIES: Bosnian Imam Mustafa Ceric on Monday prays at a funeral for 24 bodies recently unearthed from a mass grave in Rogatica, east of Sarajevo. These people were killed by Serb soldiers during the war in Bosnia in 1992 (AFP photo)

## Jordan welcomes ruling on Hanish

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Monday welcomed a ruling by a London-based international arbitration panel which awarded Yemen the bulk of the disputed islands in the Red Sea which Eritrea invaded and occupied in 1995.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdul Ilah Al Khatib said the government congratulates Yemen's leadership and people

over the peaceful settlement of the dispute.

The panel ruled that Eritrea should return to Yemen the Hanish Archipelago which the two sides claimed and clashed over.

Sana'a claimed to have inherited the islands from the Ottoman Empire while Asmara said its sovereignty over the islands had been established

during the Italian, British and Ethiopian occupation of Eritrea.

The two countries announced Friday that they accepted the ruling of the international arbitration panel.

"We consider the two parties' commitment to this decision as an expression of commitment to international law as a basis for solving disputes," said

Khatib in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra. The minister also voiced Jordan's appreciation of Eritrea's acceptance of the ruling, expressing hope that the move will open a new chapter in its relations with Yemen.

He said Jordan attaches great importance to stability in the Red Sea and wishes to promote ties with Eritrea.

## Government committee meets

(Continued from page 1)

Premier Tarawneh and the directives of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

Relations between the opposition and the government touched a historic low last year, when nine opposition parties and the 13 professional associations boycotted the parliamentary polls.

King Hussein in May held an ice-breaking meeting with union leaders, which he described as "the turn of a bright new page." Prince Hassan in August and September held a series of meetings with all civic society institutions.

"The government wants to make sure that there is a mechanism to maintain the momentum of this dialogue," Judeh told the Jordan Times.

But party leaders said they feared that the work of the dialogue committee could become a substitute for much-needed reforms.

"If a more modern elections law were in place, Parliament would be the real representative of the people, and it could exercise its constitutional function as a forum for a national debate," said Khalidoun Nasser, spokesperson of the NCP.

"There would be no need for a national dialogue committee."

However, with 3,000 members but only two deputies in the 80-member Lower House, the NCP is determined to benefit from the projected dialogue as an opportunity to forward its proposals directly to the government.

Nasser told the Jordan Times that the NCP has formed a seven-member committee to prepare a list of proposals on the time framework, the participants, and the agenda of the dialogue, which they say should mainly focus on a new elections law, with a percentage of parliamentary seats allocated to political parties, and on a new political parties law, granting state funds to parties.

The Muslim Brotherhood has not yet officially commented on the establishment of the government committee, but sources close to the movement's leadership have opposed it.

"We believe in the Crown Prince's determination to start a dialogue. We know that both the King and the Crown Prince are serious on this," a Muslim Brotherhood source said requesting anonymity.

"But we do not trust the government's intentions," he added, expressing fears that the government might use the works of the dialogue committee as a smoke screen to pass unpopular decisions.

Salem Nahhas, secretary general of the leftist Hashd Party, argued that the "national dialogue" as projected by the government could be "highly counterproductive" to the development of democracy, because the two parties engaged in it, the government on one hand and social, professional and political forces on the other, would not be on an equal footing.

"What dialogue could it be, if one side gets to decide who participates, what is being discussed, and when?"

Deputy Mahmoud Kharabsheh, head of the Lower House National Guidance Committee, stressed in a speech at a recent seminar dedicated to the issue of national dialogue that "we already have active national institutions, ... and we are not on the brink of a civil war or some disaster to have a committee headed by the prime minister for dialogue."

Columnist Samih Ma'aitah echoed the views of many writers who questioned the intentions of the government in setting up the committee.

"Is this dialogue going to be an alternative to strengthening Parliament and ensuring wider participation of political parties?" Ma'aitah asked.

## Barzan denies rift with Iraqi president

DUBAI (R) — Saddam Hussein's half-brother Barzan Al Takriti denied in an interview published on Monday reports of a rift between himself and the Iraqi leader.

He said he was delaying a return to Baghdad for pressing family reasons.

Takriti, the former Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, still lives in Switzerland. "I am staying here to be with my family and this is being done with the knowledge of the president and due to his understanding of my family situation," Takriti said, according to the London-based Asharq Al Awsat newspaper.

"I pray to God to help me overcome these circumstances so I can be there [in Baghdad] beside my brother and I hope to be able to offer something that can help him and our people," he was quoted as saying.

An Iraqi newspaper said in June that the foreign ministry was recalling ambassadors who had served more than eight years abroad. Takriti was among the envoys expected to be recalled.

He has vowed never to shake Arafat's hand.

Yitzhak Mordechai — defence minister, was a political newcomer when he joined Netanyahu's government but is now considered a potential successor to Netanyahu and a relative dove among the cabinet's hawks.

Mordechai joined Likud after 33 years of military service.

He has said he entered politics to help prevent territorial concessions that would put Israel at risk.

Natan Sharansky — industry and trade minister, is a former leading Soviet Jewish dissident who took his Yisrael ba-Aliya party of immigrants from the former Soviet Union to a surprisingly strong showing in the May 1996 elections.

He argues that the Palestinians must scrap clauses in their charter that call for Israel's destruction if the two sides are ever to make lasting peace.

The Palestinian's Yasser Arafat — has stamped Palestinian nationalism on the map, leading his people in the quest for statehood first with the gun and then with the olive branch.

As chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), he has survived plots and assassination attempts, a plane crash and military defeats at the hands of both Israel and Arab forces to win Palestinians world sympathy and acceptance.

The Oslo interim peace deals with Israel in 1993 brought Palestinians a

## Egypt to have one of world's biggest water treatment plants

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Monday inaugurated the first phase of one of the world's largest water treatment plants which will be able to purify more than one million cubic metres of water a day when completed in 2018, officials said.

The first phase of the Jabal Al Asfar plant northeast of Cairo was built by the Italian construction giant Ansaldo at a total cost of \$290 million.

Industry sources on Monday said Ansaldo is among three European companies that have been shortlisted for the construction of the second stage of the purification plant. The other firms are Degremont, a subsidiary of the French firm Lyonnaise des Eaux, and Germany's Oto.

The overall project is aimed at upgrading the waste water

system of Cairo.

Through the Jabal Al Asfar treatment plant it will be possible to purify more than one million cubic metres of water daily, avoiding this volume of polluted water flowing into the Nile and causing damage not only to the health of the population but also to agriculture, the Italian embassy said in a statement.

The statement said Italy allocated a \$36 million soft loan to finance construction of the plant as well as a \$41 million loan provided by the Italian government's export guarantee agency.

The director general of the Cairo Waste Water Organisation, Samia Saleh, told AFP in March that once the project is completed the plant will be able to treat three million cubic metres of water daily.

By then the project — one of the largest ever built — will have cost \$1.5 billion.

### 1,250 schoolchildren hospitalised

A total of 1,250 Egyptian schoolchildren suffered severe food poisoning after eating cookies provided by their village school as part of a nutrition programme, police said on Monday.

Four of the children are still in a critical condition, they said.

The incident took place on Sunday in village schools in Derina, in the northern province of Daqqliya.

The children were rushed to several hospitals in nearby Mansura, the police said, and 30 were still in intensive care wards Monday.



### 95-year-old loops a record loop

LONDON (AP) — A 95-year-old woman has winged her way into the Guinness Book of Records after looping-the-loop in a glider. "I've always wanted to fly like birds do," Adeline Ahlitt, whose flight in May was organised by the retirement home where she lives near Coventry, in central England. "The first thing I knew about being upside down was when I lost sight of the horizon," Mrs. Ahlitt added. "I started to reach to release my parachute, but the pilot told me to sit back and enjoy it." The Guinness Book of Records has opened a new category: "Oldest person to loop-the-loop in an unpowered glider."

### Pilgrims gather to Virgin Mary's last apparition

CONYERS (R) — Thousands of Catholic pilgrims gathered at a Georgia farm where they believe the Virgin Mary will give a final message to a woman who claims to have spoken to her regularly for seven years. "We decided to come because this is her last apparition," pilgrim Bob Kehler said. "She [the Virgin Mary] is the commander-in-chief, the one who represents Jesus, and it has been delegated to her to gather up all her children."

### Leonardo's 'Lady with Ermine' to go on display in Italy

ROME (AP) — After nearly 200 years in Poland, Leonardo da Vinci's portrait "Lady with Ermine," painted around 1490, will return to Italy next week and go on display in various cities. Rome will be the first city to host the art work starting Thursday at the Quirinal Palace, the building that houses the president's office. Polish Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski bought the portrait as a gift for his mother Isabella around 1800 while he was travelling in Italy. Its temporary return from Poland is part of a cultural exchange between the two countries.

### Commemoration in memory of John Denver

ASPEN (AP) — The first anniversary of John Denver's death will be commemorated with a charity concert and other events remembering the pop singer who was big in the 1970s. Several former bandmates sold out "A Musical Tribute to John Denver" Sunday benefiting a charity for the disabled. Another Sunday event benefits the Flunger Project, Planet 2000 and other groups Denver supported. Various Aspen-area churches held memorials over the weekend. Denver died Oct. 12, 1997, when the small plane he was piloting crashed into the ocean near Pacific Grove, California.

### Walser awarded Peace Prize in Frankfurt

FRANKFURT (AP) — Martin Walser, whose novels explore the conscience of Germans rebuilding the nation after World War II, was awarded the prestigious Peace Prize at the Frankfurt International Book Fair on Sunday. In a ceremony at St. Paul's Church that included President Roman Herzog, the 71-year-old German author was praised as one of the country's most important literary figures. Walser's novels and essays "explained to the world and to Germans their own country and brought them closer together," said the German Book Trade Association awards committee, which awarded the prize worth \$15,300.

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By Alia A. Tou and Ghadeer

AMMAN — Fastl... out of court... with the Minis... ahead of an... court ruling on the... against the gove... over an alleged br... Fastlink Chief